

Canning United Baptist Church

ABF FALL CONFERENCE

September 22nd & 23rd, 1995
Canning United Baptist Church

Theme

"Baptists and the Larger Picture"

How do we relate with other denominations?
What do we have to offer?

Speaker

Dr. David Morrison

Chair of Dept. of Religious Studies
University of P.E.I.

-PROGRAMME-

Friday evening:

6:30 p.m.	Registration	
7:00 p.m.	Opening Devotions:	Rev. John Dickinson
7:20 p.m.	Welcome:	Rev. Andrew Crowell
7:30 p.m.	Lecture I:	Dr. David Morrison
8:30 p.m.	Break	
8:45 p.m.	The Service of Holy Communion	
9:00 p.m.	Reception	

Saturday

9:00 a.m.	Devotions:	Rev. Stan Hasteley Executive Director, Alliance of Baptists
9:20 a.m.	Introductions, Notices	
9:30 a.m.	Lecture II:	Dr. David Morrison
10:30 a.m.	Coffee Break	
10:45 a.m.	Talk Back Sessions	
Noon	LUNCH AT THE CHURCH	
1:00 p.m.	Business Meeting	
3:00 p.m.	Dismiss	

Limited Number - Free Billets

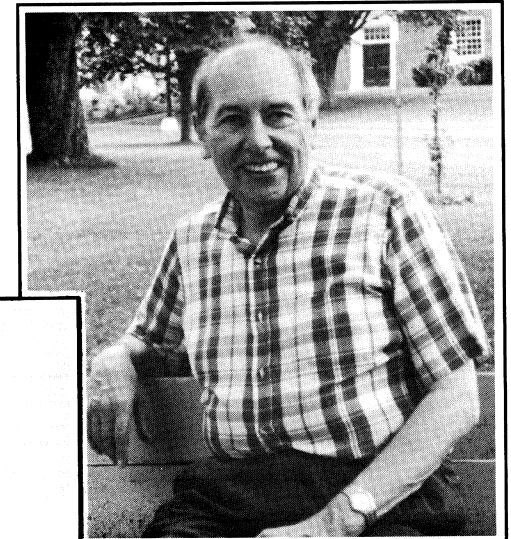
ABF Conference: Contact Rev. Andrew Crowell
(one week in advance) 902-582-3047

Child-Care

Care for children ages 6 and under will be provided on the Church premises

ATLANTIC BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP BULLETIN

ABF Conference - Canning
September 22nd & 23rd



John Dickinson



Stan Hasteley

Devotional speakers at the ABF Fall Conference September 22nd and 23rd will be: John Dickinson, chair of "The Gathering" in Ontario, and Stan Hasteley, executive director of the Alliance of Baptists, Washington, D.C. Please see back page for the programme.

SEPTEMBER 1995



within
Convention

ATLANTIC BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP

Since 1971
Promoting Historic Baptist Principles
Within the
Atlantic United Baptist Convention

President

Elaine Anne MacGregor
6327 Liverpool St,
Halifax, N.S.
B3L 1Y1

Secretary

Derrick Marshall
P.O. Box 272
Annapolis Royal, N.S.
B0S 1A0

Past President

Ed Colquhoun
1A Lamy St.
Amherst, N.S.
B4H 2B2

1st Vice-President

Philip Griffin-Allwood
P.O. Box 68
Lawrencetown, N.S.
B0S 1M0

Treasurer

John Churchill
P.O. Box 56
Port Williams, N.S.
B0P 1T0

Bulletin Editor and Public Relations

Terry Tingley
Box 10 Site 23
RR#4 Armdale, N.S.
B3L 4J4

2nd Vice-President

Adele Crowell
820 Herring Cove Rd.
Halifax, N.S.
B3R 1J2

Friends Secretary

Dorothy Lovesey
P.O. Box 68
Wolfville, N.S.
B0P 1X0

Bulletin Distribution

Isobel Horton
P.O. Box 586
Wolfville, N.S.
B0P 1X0

Exciting Time in Life of ABF

Elaine Anne MacGregor, President



Elaine Anne MacGregor

This is a very exciting time in the life of the ABF. This will be evidenced by our Assembly to be held September 22nd and 23rd at the Canning United Baptist Church. The growth of the ABF will be demonstrated by the participation in the programme of Stan Haste, executive director of the **Alliance of Baptists** (headquarters in Washington, D.C.); John Dickinson, chair of the executive of **the Gathering**, a group of Ontario Baptists with aims and objectives similar to the ABF; and, **David Morrison**, the keynote speaker, who is head of the religious education department at UPEI. He will address the topic of what Baptists have to offer mainline Christianity.

We hope to have as first time visitors to ABF a delegation of members of the congregation of **Beaver Dam Baptist Church** in Franklin, Virginia. They come as fellow Baptists who are eager to

meet, worship with, and learn more about Canadian Baptists. During our business meeting we will discuss plans to send delegates to the March 14th - 16th, 1996, **Alliance Convocation** to be held in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Exciting to be a Baptist

If you have been thinking about attending an ABF Conference but have never done so, now is the time to attend. Child care for children ages six and under will be provided and billets can be arranged. Come for the fellowship. Take this time to recharge your spiritual batteries. Meet other Baptists. Learn why it is exciting to be a Baptist.

On behalf of the ABF I extend to you a warm invitation and look forward to meeting you.

“The Gathering”

John H. Dickinson

Transactional leadership is a style familiar to Baptists. The congregation enters into discussion and seeks to find a direction for the church through a consensus of individual concepts. An increasing number of churches are turning to Transitional leadership. In Transitional leadership the leadership comes to a decision on the direction in which the church should go and insists on the church moving in that direction.

This is one of the changes occurring in the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec that is causing concern for a growing number of individuals who have banded together in an organization called “The Gathering”. The Gathering has met four times over the last two years and has established a regular time of gathering on the last weekend in April and in October. The next gathering will occur at Woodbine Heights Baptist Church in Toronto with the Principal of Knox College speaking on the Church in the 21st Century.

Other issues which have caused concern have been the issue of women in ministry, ecumenical relationships, the changing nature of seminary education at McMaster, the nature of the social responsibility of the church and open and closed membership.

There is a growing understanding within ‘The Gathering’ that what we are experiencing is not a left right split; it is not a discussion over Christology, Eschatology, Scriptural Authority or any of the Liberal versus Conservative issues. Instead it is a horizontal division which has plagued Baptists for over three hundred years. In the British background these divisions are identified as General versus Particular Baptists. General Baptists take their basic stand on the Arminian concept of General atonement as adopted by Smyth and Helwys in Amsterdam. Particular Baptists have looked back to the concepts of Particular atonement as espoused by Calvin.

In the history of the Baptists of Ontario and Quebec the origins of the two streams are readily observable. The British Baptists centered in Montreal were of the General Persuasion who established churches along the North Shores of Lakes Ontario and Erie were of the Particular persuasion. (It should be noted that in the American setting, as in the Maritimes, these divisions were identified as the Free or Free-will Baptists and the Regular Baptists).

The issues about which they disagreed were open and closed communion and whether seminary education should be Theological or Doctrinal.

These issues delayed the creation of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec until 1888, and they were not resolved; the two bodies only agreed to live in one house. The split in the B.C.O.Q. Convention in 1927 was over the education issue, and the General and Particular viewpoints have been the source of tension over the years.

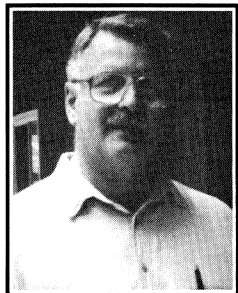
It is the intention of ‘The Gathering’ to maintain the house in good order while promoting with some evangelical zeal the scriptural positions of the General Baptists and it is our desire to enter into a deepening relationship with the Atlantic Baptist Fellowship for mutual edification and stimulation and for the benefit of the denomination and the country.

Editor’s note:

John H. Dickinson,
Chairperson, The Gathering
will be participating in the ABF Fall Conference.

Editorial Comment

Berwick Camp Meeting



Leland MacLean

Leland MacLean, Onslow, N.S., was elected president of the Berwick United Church Camp Meeting Association during this year's 124th program July 28 - August 6. Mr. MacLean, a retired school administrator, will serve a three year term. He has attended Berwick Camp Meetings for more than 50 years and regards it as "a place of fellowship with family and friends - and a natural setting to regenerate the physical and spiritual self." Many Baptists have attended Berwick Camp Meetings since they began in 1872. Some have provided leadership ...like Dr. M.R.B. Lovesey and Dr. J.R.C. Perkin, who were Bible Study leaders in '57 and '71 respectively. Those who have attended Berwick Camp Meetings sum up their experiences as "inspiring memories and spiritual enrichment."

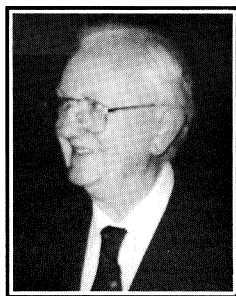
Vision 2000

In the June '94 ABF BULLETIN, Rev. Roger Prentice, chaplain, Acadia University, suggested the ABF provide a HALL OF RESIDENCE where up to 6 ADC students could live in community and in the summer months the Hall would be a wonderful location for spiritual retreat or study programmes.

As well, this editor has felt for some time that an opportunity should be provided for ABF'ers to meet at a location/place using a retreat format for several days to come to grips with pressing issues/concerns. There is genuine joy in being with friends who share a common allegiance to Jesus Christ. The present format for ABF Assemblies does not provide adequate time/space for fellowship. Would such fellowship in a retreat atmosphere not strengthen ABF by enabling us to get to know one another better and thus find purpose and meaning in all that we seek to do?



Berwick Camp



M.R. B. Lovesey

A letter to ABF Bulletin Editor

Dear Editor:

Without wishing to prolong the matter too much I believe I must make some response to the lengthy riposte by Dr. Malcolm Horsnell in the previous issue of the ABF Bulletin to the questions raised about McMaster Divinity College.

Methinks the protestations too intense and the hyperbole too heavy handed (viz: the copyright notice at the end of the letter) for Dr. Horsnell's piece to be a satisfying read. For a more comprehensive historical picture one might suggest interviews with the five support staff members and the five faculty members, all of whom have left the regular employ of the College prematurely since 1991. They might, if they are not under any restraints, fill out the picture.

One specific matter on which I would like to make some personal comment is the reference to my early retirement after twenty-six and a half years on the College faculty. This retirement will take effect Dec. 31, 1995 and is now public knowledge. Dr. Horsnell states, "Of course the author of the article was not aware of the very recent retirement, which I hasten to add was voluntary, is not a retirement forced by the College and is not a retirement into oblivion but to a voluntarily chosen new avenue of work". The positive inference to be drawn from this and the context in which it is placed, is, unfortunately, born of a blatant ignorance. It is not really a question of whether Dr. Horsnell's implied meaning in his comments about my early retirement is right or wrong. Since he and I have had no conversations at all on the matter of my reasons for taking early retirement from the College, and since he and I had had, at the time of his writing, no conversations on my future plans, he does not know whether he is right or wrong. This, I would suggest, makes for a very precarious historiography.

Yours sincerely,

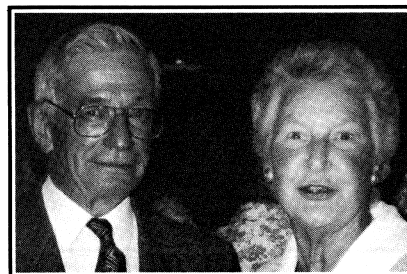
T.R. Hobbs, Ph.D.

June 28, 1995

In the Ministry of the Diaconate



Deacons Ian
Campbell,
Linda Mosher,
& Vicki Brown,
Bayside Baptist
Church



Deacons: Dr. Bruce
Morton, Alice Auld
First Baptist
Church - Halifax

“Quality Care”

by Rev. J. Mel Scott
Matthew 25: 31-46

According to the Scriptures, to be a sheep rather than a goat is relatively easy. A simple investment of time and resources in social welfare is all that is needed to make one "blessed of my Father", according to Jesus. But Jesus was advocating compassion, and surely there is more to compassion than the donation of our material possessions. Yes, there is!

LISTEN! What happens after you have wined, dined and housed the unfortunate? What goes on at the prison or at the sick bed between the visitor and the visited? After some awkward moments, there is usually a conversation. Let the visited do the talking.

The patient tells you about her operation. The prisoner tells you about an unhappy past.. The needy tell you a hard luck story. This needs to be told to a good listener, and a good listener is one who will...

HEAR! Be attentive! Listen with the ears, the eyes and the heart. At times the visited will say more with posture than with words. Misty eyes do not give credence to, "I'm O.K." Listen attentively and hear what is being said by the whole person. Perhaps then we will ...

UNDERSTAND! Understanding isn't easy. God's creatures are much too complex for that. So don't ever assume you know exactly what is going on. But keep trying. The visited will know instinctively you are striving to empathize ... to

APPRECIATE! When the story is told, the listener often realizes that he could not have handled a similar situation nearly as well as the one to whom he offers comfort. When that happens, say so. Appreciate!

PROCEED WITH CAUTION! A good listener, who hears, understands and appreciates, is always very reluctant to give advice. To give advice implies you know how to run her life better than she does. Even when asked, "What would you do if you were me?", don't be afraid to say "I don't know!" or, if you have what you think may be a solution, say "Have you ever considered ...?"

Good caring is never saying you're sorry.. Being overly sympathetic destroys hope. It tells him that you can't see any way out. Keep hope alive with encouragement. Too much sympathy destroys hope.

BE COMPASSIONATE! Forget the sheep and the goats. Don't look for rewards. Do your best for the unfortunate. The blessings will come as an unexpected surprise!

ABF BULLETIN

The ABF Bulletin is published quarterly by the Atlantic Baptist Fellowship.

Submissions: Articles must be less than 500 words in length.

Opinions and views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the ABF, or the Editor.

The BULLETIN is mailed to interested churches and individuals. Those wishing to receive the BULLETIN, and all details of changes of address, etc., are to be sent to the distribution organizer :

Mrs. Isobel Horton, P.O. Box 586, Wolfville, N.S. BOP 1X0

The BULLETIN is mailed free of charge. Donations towards cost of publication are gratefully received and should be mailed to the treasurer: Dr. John Churchill, P.O. Box 56, Port Williams, N.S. BOP ITO. Receipts for income tax purposes will be mailed.

Next Issue - ABF BULLETIN December, 1995
Deadline for Submissions November 9th

Credible Christianity

Ed Colquhoun

The credibility of Christianity seems intertwined with the credibility and the health of its institutions: the Church, the Bible, Christian Theology, and so on. In the small span of time that I have been observing the Church, it has remained fashionable to predict its imminent demise. The Friends of the Atlantic Ecumenical Council in their winter newsletter quote Douglas Hall who observes in *The Future of the Church* "The Church has served a useful purpose, no doubt, and we shall honor its memory. But our pious forbears have gone and our children have lost interest, and we cannot account for others, present and future, who may have some consolation out of these stones...our duty, as the remnant of this once proud institution, is to...finish it up."

Theological thinking has suffered a major upheaval. In my recent reading, I was amazed to see how God is Dead theology, which I thought had **died** soon after I left Divinity School, has been transformed into deconstruction and in many quarters has taken over academic thought. The ground of our being has ceased to exist. Nothing is what it appears to be. Criticism is more important than literature, an interesting observation from critics, although in this case they say they are **not** critics. In fact, to them all texts--Shakespeare, literary criticism, rap music, novels--all are said to be of equal importance with one major exception. Anything that is respected, honored, or revered is especially important as a negative example. These texts are vilified; it is invariably proven that, in fact, they mean just the opposite of what we thought they meant.

The Bible, and by association the Judeo-Christian beliefs arising out of it, are considered beneath contempt. In his book *Signs of the Times*, critic David Lehman takes special pains and great pleasure, in exposing the moral blindness that he finds in deconstructionism. He cites deconstructionist Jonathan Culler who, in *Framing the Sign; Criticism and its Institutions* (1988) rants "Down with the priests" attacking Northrop Frye among others whom he sees as "promoters of religion." Read the Bible, Culler says, "not as poetry or narrative but as a powerfully influential racist and sexist text." Commenting on this remark Lehman says "On this rock the deconstructionist builds his antichurch. How partial, prejudicial, and reductive is his view of the Bible, and yet how absolute is his claim for that view. This is, in brief, the creed of atheistic fundamentalism, as extreme in its way as the other kind of fundamentalism, as intolerant, and as hostile to the spirit of secular humanism."

The deconstructionists have exposed the Bible to what is, in their eyes only, devastating criticism. However, it would be as much a mistake to ignore them as to swallow their interpretation whole. They have identified some aspects of Biblical thinking which can be a stumbling block. For example, we must have an answer to the sexism demonstrated in much of Paul's writing. However, like many of the Christian fundamentalists, deconstructionists fail to penetrate the poetic, the spiritual, the essential meaning of the Bible. As Northrop Frye knew, that essence is grandly poetic.

At Easter, we are forced to read and listen to legions of Biblical interpreters who don't have the faintest idea about the definitive Chapter on the central event of Easter. The resurrection is to be understood poetically.

Listen to I Cor. 15: 25f. "For he must reign until he has put all things in subjection under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death." Anyone who can't see that this is figurative, metaphorical language might as well stop reading. But for the benefit of the literally minded, Paul goes on. v. 35ff. "But someone will ask 'How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?'" Then the word that stops most people from reading further. "Fool!" Followed by a passionate appeal to a higher, less corporeal, more mystical, even poetic understanding of resurrection "It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body....Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven "As if it needed saying "Listen, I will tell you a mystery!"

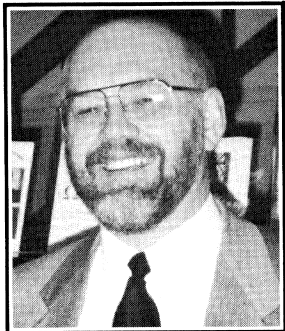
From the book of 4th Maccabees which scraped into the Appendix to the Greek Bible and therefore into the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books of the Revised Standard Version and the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible comes an interesting text commenting on a credible faith. This book, which contains more first century Greek philosophy than any other Biblical book, is an attempt to tie together credible thinking and the credible living. Devout reason is its watchword. The four cardinal virtues of the Platonic and Stoic traditions-rational judgement, self-control, justice, and courage are its content.

An old man remains true to his faith through unbelievable torture. Chapter 7, verse 9 reads "You, father, strengthened our loyalty to the law through your glorious endurance, and you did not abandon the holiness which you praised, but by your deeds you made your words of divine philosophy credible." Why have theologically weak books like James remained in the New Testament? Is it because this is the test of credibility that finally convinces people? With actions, with deeds, Jesus complemented and demonstrated his teachings.

A great paradox of our faith is that we do not have it in our power to be credible. The credibility that sustains Christianity through the many human disasters inside and outside of the church comes from somewhere else. As we strive in this group of Atlantic Baptist Fellowship Christians to be credible, that is capable of being believed and worthy of confidence, we know too well our own limitations. May we know also the source of our credibility.

(Editor's note: This address was delivered at the spring luncheon for "Friends")

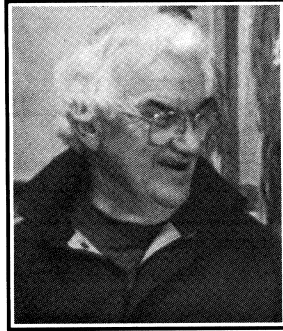
ABF Photo Album



Ed Colquhoun



Fran Harvey



Gerry Harrop

ABF Executive Plans Programs

The ABF Executive met in Wolfville on August 25th. President Elaine Anne MacGregor chaired the meeting called to finalize plans for the fall conference as well as plan anniversary celebrations (ABF's 25th!) for next year - the fall of '96. John Dickinson, chair of "the Gathering", Ontario, attended the meeting and brought members up-to-date re the background and purpose and plans of the group.

The executive also discussed possibilities of students studying for the ministry as well as ABF members attending the convocation of the Alliance of Baptists in Charlotte, North Carolina, March 14 - 16, 1996.

BOOK REVIEW

by M.R.B. Lovesey

Morrison, David. Dialogue.- Christianity in Canada: A Dialogue with Christian Leadership. Part One.- What Do Churches Really Believe, 1994. Part Two- What Are the Issues, 1995. Published by Strathmore Publications, 22 Water Street, Charlottetown, PEI, C1A 1A1.

If, as a committed and thinking Christian, you are needing help in understanding the current ecclesiastical situation in Canada, you can do no better than to consult the two volumes mentioned above, written by David Morrison, Chair of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Prince Edward Island. Dr. Morrison is an Anglican, a main-line Christian, who devised an interesting methodology in his attempt to understand the current state of theology and ethics held by the churches of our time.. His method was to take his tape-recorder with him and interview outstanding representatives of the main-line churches, and a few others, and then to write-up the conversations in a series of brief chapters that summarise their personal religious interests and beliefs. We come in contact with the names of many persons who will be well known to the readers of this Bulletin - Russell Hatton, J.R.C.Perkin, James H. MacDonald, John Cameron, Gordon McDermid, Brian Stiller, Lois Wilson, Ted Scott, Gregory Baum, Tom Ryan, to name a few. The attempt is made, in the interests of honest religion, to assess the opinions in both the theological and ethical fields, held by recognized leaders of the Church of today.

Readers of this paper will be interested in the views of Jim Perkin, recently retired as the president of Acadia University, who is chosen to represent the Baptist Churches. After giving thumb-nail sketches of Baptist history and principles, Perkin tells us that in recent years he has come to the position that all theology is divisive. "Theology, whatever sort it is, is divisive because it sets people off from one another." Beyond theology "is the experience of Christian Love." Nonetheless, Perkin has no difficulty about the use of the word "mythology," seeing the birth narratives of Jesus in the Gospels as mythological. The resurrection accounts are also mythological. "I do not find it necessary to believe in the bodily resurrection (of Christ). Equally I cannot explain the beginning of the Church and the suffering of the martyrs and all of these things if the whole of the resurrection narrative rested on a hoax. There just had to be something . . . to explain the beginning of Christianity and the beginning of the Church. What that something was I don't know, and hence I'm not only comfortable with the word myth of the resurrection, it's the only word I know that is adequate."

We note that our interviewer had a session with a representative of the conservative-evangelicals in the person of Brian Stiller. Dr. Brian C. Stiller was educated at a Pentecostal college and graduated with degrees from the University of Toronto and Wycliffe College. Following service with the Canadian Youth for Christ, he has been the Executive Director of the Evangelical Fellowship since 1983. An ordained Pentecostal minister, he has written widely and is well-known as host of a weekly TV programme which looks at contemporary issues from a moral and ethical standpoint. No lover of main-line protestants he contends for protestant orthodoxy.

The volumes are warmly recommended for personal and group study.

Festival of Flowers

A very colourful and interesting event took place at St. Andrew's Anglican Church, Indian Harbour, N.S., August 25 - 27, i.e., a Festival of Flowers. The church was decorated throughout its interior with flowers depicting familiar Bible stories, with the main theme being the sea. A flower service took place on the Sunday morning.

ABOLISH NUCLEAR WEAPONS!

ABOLISH WAR!

Jud Corey

The World Court Project has scored significant successes to date. Two questions concerning the legal status of nuclear weapons are now before the International Court of Justice: one from W.H.O. and one from the U.N.G.A. They deal with the threat or use of nuclear weapons.

The Court has already accepted legal briefs on the question and has called for more. It is expected the Court will combine the two requests for legal ruling and begin hearing the case as early as the end of 1995. There is great hope for the success of the World C.P., despite Canada's failure, to date, to support it.

On another front, there is frustration and anger, leading to action. It comes from the decision of France to resume nuclear testing. What is so disturbing about France's decision? Everything: physical harm, political disturbance, breach of promise, and moral irresponsibility.

Testing exposes "populations under French colonial domination to the ever-present risks of short- and long-term radiation." All 140 of France's tests have been carried out far from France.

France's testing will encourage the pro-testing elements in the U.S., Britain, China and Russia. Also it encourages threshold nuclear powers such as Iraq, Iran and Pakistan to follow the French lead.

It is a blatant denial of a clear agreement: Only weeks ago the parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) pledged themselves to negotiate a cessation of the arms race and to pursue nuclear disarmament. Now, in contempt toward non-nuclear countries, France expresses intention to retain its nuclear strike force as a deterrent.

In the decision to test, the nuclear weapons states (NWS) have been weighed in the balance and found wanting: During the negotiations for the W.C.P. in the U.N., the NWS did all in their power to block a resolution from the U.N.G.A. going to the World Court, asking for a legal judgement on nuclear weapons.

After failing that tactic the NWS made an indefinite extension of the NPT, DESPITE THEIR RECORD OF PAST FAILURE IN stopping proliferation of nuclear weapons, and despite the able arguing of such able and credible people as William Sloan Coffin, Richard Falk, Daniel Elsborg and Eugene Carroll, for a general campaign for the abolition of nuclear weapons, bringing their own experience to bear.

The decision to resume testing is a re-assertion of the half-century-old arrogance in holding the threat of annihilation over the world.

This arrogance, defiance, and blatant breaking of pledge serves to make clearer than ever that there is one, and only one sane, responsible course to pursue --- the abolition of all nuclear weapons. The way is now opening in the I.C.J.

What are committed people doing?

Physicians for Global Survival (PGS) are still gathering "Declarations of Conscience" to be submitted to the I.C.J. They are also requesting endorsements from organizations.

Thousands of people, individuals and groups are openly protesting the resumption of nuclear testing. Thousands of people of many faiths and some whose only faith is in the rightness of the cause of disarmament and peace, are working to abolish nuclear weapons, and ultimately, war itself. Surely those who believe that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself" (2 Cor. 5:19) will want to be on the side of liberation from nuclear arrogance, and of reconciliation of the conflicting powers and peoples.

Editor's Note: For more information on this topic, please contact: Jud Corey A.T.M., 543 Lancaster Ave., Saint John, N.B. E2M 2L9

Mission Task on behalf of Women

Roger Cann

Editor's Note: The first article by Roger Cann on this topic appeared in the June issue. In it he stated that a major task for Christian Missions is to ensure justice for women in the world.

IV. Social Evolution

Women are getting a fair shake in some arenas. They have a long way to go, but there are signs that a social evolution or revolution is taking place. Margaret Wentz reports in *The Globe and Mail* that in 1994:

- Prize-winners among accounting graduates: eight of 12 were women.
- More than half of the law and medical students in Canada are women.
- The salary gap between men and women is shrinking
- Women are forming new businesses at twice the rate of men.
- Two women ran against each other for mayor of the City of Toronto.
- The UN conference in Cairo: status of women key to world poverty.

Globally women have made gains in some areas but that is only relative to their prior status. Amnesty International summarizes, "No country in the world treats its women as well as its men." *Human Rights Are Women's Right*, Amnesty International 1995

There have been improvements in women's education, health and nutrition, but women and girls in many parts of the world still receive less education, less food and less health care than men or boys. Poverty in Canada hits women much more than men. 58% of single-parent families headed by women live in poverty. Elderly women are also more likely to be poor than elderly men. The world-wide recession, the debt crisis and government policies of cutbacks in spending on health, education and social development threaten to reverse the progress that has been made in gender equality in Canada and in the world.

V. Women's Human Rights

In 1994 the Canadian Council of Churches stated, "At the root of the biblical heritage of Christians is the affirmation that all people- both women and men - are created fully and equally in the image of God. That affirmation, however, has not always been lived out in the structures, practises and teachings of the churches." The Council was addressing the Canadian Government on Women's Human Rights.

The United Nations observed a Decade for Women 1976-85. The World Council of Churches is currently observing an Ecumenical Decade for Churches in Solidarity with Women, 1988-98. The Ecumenical Decade is an attempt to have the churches confront their discrimination towards women, while also calling on governments to address women's human rights.

The Canadian Council of Churches' statement concludes; "Enshrining women's right to freedom from violence and to participate in decisions affecting their own lives would be in keeping with the biblical affirmation of the equality of women and men as imaging the Creator." (*Ten Days for World Development 1995*)

VI. Biblical Witness: Jesus and Women

Throughout his ministry, Jesus demonstrated that both men and women are equal and worthy in God's sight. In his encounters with women, Jesus defied the cultural, religious and social taboos against women, and sought to give women full dignity and freedom as persons.

With the woman who was hemorrhaging for twelve years, Jesus not only healed her physically but also restored her socially. This woman was a social outcast. According to the Jewish law, anyone who came into contact with her became unclean. In desperation and in faith, she found Jesus in a crowd, touched his garment and was healed. She could have escaped unnoticed but Jesus deliberately called public attention to her. Instead of rebuking her for touching him or shrinking from her touch, Jesus recognized her as a person, praised her faith and reinstated her into society as a person worthy of respect.

In the narrative of Mary and Martha, we find Mary sitting at Jesus' feet hungry to learn from

him--a place exclusively reserved for men. Martha, on the other hand, accepts her role of serving food but is frustrated, perhaps by what she perceives to be Mary's higher ambition: to know more than what her traditional role would demand. In a day when women were prohibited from studying the Torah, Jesus refused to force Mary into a stereotype and even encourages the role that Mary has taken. He protects her by saying what she has chosen to do will not be taken from her.

At his resurrection, Jesus deliberately breaks tradition. In Jewish society, women were not permitted to bear witness and yet it is women who are commissioned to be the first witnesses of his resurrection and sent to "Go, tell the disciples..." By choosing them, he shows they are worthy of the task.

Clearly Jesus emphasized the worth of women, and lifted them to equality with men. Search the gospels and you will not find one instance when Jesus suggests a secondary role of women in any sphere.

VII. Women in the Early Church

In sharp contrast with the place given to women in Jewish society according to the Old Testament, in the early church women moved on a plane more equal with men. The home of John Mark's mother may have been the meeting place of the first Christians. (Acts 1.13-14; 12.12) Christian groups which became the first churches felt that in Christ there was neither male or female. (Gal 3.28) Women in the early church served as prophets (Acts 21.29), ministers (Rom 16.1), teachers, fellow workers with the apostles, (1 Cor 9.5), and consecrated business women. Paul addressed his letters to both men and women. (1 Cor 15.1)

There are three passages which give common advice on; the domestic duties of husbands and wives, parents and children, and masters and their slaves. (Eph 5.22-6.9; Col 3.18-4.1; 1 Pet 2.18-3.7) This suggests there was a degree of common understanding in the churches on these social issues. Since slavery has disappeared, and since women now enjoy political and economic freedom unimagined in New Testament times, it would not be reasonable to take these passages as having literal application today.

The same would be true with the passages denigrating the role of women in Christian worship. (1 Cor 11.3-16; 1 Tim 2.9-15) Just as we would like for Paul to advocate the end of slavery, but he didn't, we would have liked to have him support women's participation in worship services, but he didn't. In his letter to the Corinthians, and to Timothy, he is most severe. Contrast that with his letter to the Galatians.

The issue is the relationship of social customs to Christian morality. Paul has combined Jewish traditions with divine authority, and the customary procedures of the day with the eternal will of God. While Paul advocated freedom from Jewish law and the requirement for circumcision in his conflict with the Judaizing element in the church, he was stuck on Judaistic and rabbinical interpretations of the status of women in the religious community.

Seek the mind of Christ as shown in the Gospels.

Note to Readers

Dr. Walter Shurden's lecture presented at the Spring Sessions of ABF was to appear in this issue. It had not arrived at press time.

Service Awards

During the AUBC annual assembly in Wolfville

Roger and Sadie Cann received CBM service pins for their service overseas in India.

Information

If you have a question re the Bulletin, or, ABF activities, phone 902-852-4405.

AUBC ASSEMBLY IN WOLFFVILLE AUG 23-26

1996 - 2000 EMPHASIS "NOW IS THE TIME"

by Editor, ABF Bulletin

Tough economic times continue to plague budgets according to many reports presented to the 149th annual assembly of the United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces. This was best summed up by Dr. Andrew McRae, principal and dean of the Acadia Divinity College, in the conclusion of his report:

Future of funding. It is expected that we will soon take large cuts in our Government support, amounting to many thousands of dollars. This will face the Denomination with a crisis in a year or two. Proposed UIM support for next year is less, in dollars, than this year, and the same as it was 13 years ago. Surely, we need a Denominational rethinking of how we determine priorities. How important is the training of ministers to our Convention? Very soon that question will have to be answered. Meantime, the College continues with confidence and faith to meet the future, believing that this is a work God established, and intends to prosper. Pray for us, and support us in every way you can. (p. 117, 1995 Yearbook)

The Home Mission Board in its report stated that it "continues to reduce the total amount of grants and churches supported due to financial restraints of these days. Because of this, no new grants were made throughout the year and the Board was not able to provide any summer ministry grants." (p. 88, 1995 yearbook)

Now is the time! No question! Time to get Convention priorities sorted out...!

The following statements from reports prove interesting: Evangelism Commission: "With the growing resistance in our society to the idea of commitment to an organization, and even a resistance to baptism, the commission has recognized the need to emphasize the Biblical rationale and Biblical imperative to Believer's Baptism" (p.84, 1995 Yearbook).

Board of Publication: "The Board continues to wrestle with the slow decline in subscriptions that we are experiencing, as are most religious publications in North America. This is a concern for us and seem to be part of a wider shifting in what it means to be a member of a denomination in our society."(p. 111, 1995 Yearbook)

Dr. Thompson Retiring-

Rev. Dr. Eugene Thompson is being replaced as executive minister by Dr. Harry Gardner M. Div (Acadia), D. Min (Fuller Theological Seminary), who has been the director of Home Missions and Church Planting since 1989. Dr. Gardner begins a five year term February 1, 1996.

Rev. Ron Baxter provided effective leadership as president and handed the gavel over to Mr. Rupert Tingley, Moncton, who will preside over the 150th sessions.

ACCOMMODATIONS

ABF CONFERENCE - SEPTEMBER 22/23 Canning United Baptist Church

-Suggestions-

Planters' (Barracks) Country Inn

Ted and Grace Fraser - Innkeepers
1468 Starr's Point Road,
Port Williams, NS B0P 1T0
Phone: (902) 542-7879 Fax: (902) 542-4442
Reservations: 1-800-661-7879

The Old Rectory

Bed & Breakfast
Ron and Carol Buckley, RR#1, Port Williams,
N.S. B0P 1T0. Ph: 1-902-542-1815.
Hwy 358, 2 km N from Port Williams.

Tree Tops Bed & Breakfast

Eleanor and Bernard Mason,
Tree Tops, RR #3, Canning, N.S.
B0P 1H0. Ph: 1-902-582-7470.

Old Orchard Inn

Exit 11, Greenwich, Nova Scotia
P.O. Box 1090, Wolfville, Nova Scotia
B0P 1X0

Bus: (902) 542-5751

Fax.: (902) 542-2276

Please request special rate for those attending
ABF Conference S-\$59.00 Double - \$66.00
(Register before Sept. 13th)

MARGINAL NOTES

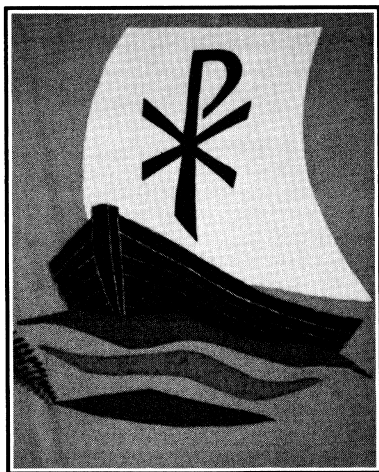
by Grammateus

In the most recent issue of the *Atlantic Baptist* we were reminded of the sorry, stagnant state of our churches. Baptisms are rare, in many churches non-existent. Membership is almost everywhere in decline. Financial resources for missionary outreach and social service are drying up. There is little evidence of spiritual life. This sad condition exists across the country and is by no means peculiar to our denomination.

In his second lecture at our spring retreat, Dr. Walter Shurden reminded us about the need of our churches becoming true communities. The title of his "precture" (as he called it) was The Baptist Vision of Community and the Current Addiction. At one point he emphasized the difficulty of achieving community in a "megachurch." In Atlantic Canada, among Baptists at least, we have few megachurches--none at all of the Texan variety. But we do have some churches where many, perhaps most, of the members, participate only in Sunday morning worship, and that participation is far short of participation. True community can only be attempted, and sometimes achieved, in smaller groups within larger congregations. In smaller churches we should strive to achieve community involving the whole membership.

The New Testament word translated as "communion" or "fellowship" is *koinónia*. It comes from a verb (*koinónéo*) which means to share in, to participate in. It does not envisage a kind of spectator membership. True community or communion, can be achieved when people know each other by name and face and trust one another. I think that *koinónia* is sometimes achieved in a sharing group of a dozen or so people, but is celebrated in the whole congregation when we meet for worship, especially when we celebrate together the Gospel sacraments:

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation (*koinonia*) in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation (*koinonia*) in the body of Christ. Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. (I Corinthians 10:16-17).



Blessing of the Fleet

The 14th annual blessing of the fleet and S.S. Atlantic Memorial services were held in Terence Bay, Halifax County, on July 23rd. Among the participating clergy were: Archdeacon Sue Moxley, St. Paul's Anglican Church; Terence Bay; Fr. Martin Currie, Chancellor and Vicar General, Archdiocese of Halifax; Rev. Jack Wainwright, Mission to Seamen; Fr. Louis Saldana, Shad Bay (Mount Carmel parish); and, Rev. Terry Tingley, interim minister, Bayside United Baptist Church.

Friends of the Atlantic Baptist Fellowship

FRIENDS are sympathetic to the aims of the ABF, which are:

- (1) To witness to the freedom implicit in the voluntary principle in religion which is the essence of the traditional Baptist position;
- (2) To affirm and celebrate Baptist participation in, and witness to the whole, visible, catholic and evangelical church of Jesus Christ;
- (3) To strengthen the United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces and to encourage it to strive for the above;
- (4) To provide a forum for the discussion of doctrinal and ethical questions and social problems and policies in that spirit of tolerance and mutual respect which issues from Christian love;
- (5) To publish, at regular intervals, a Bulletin which seeks to further these aims and which describes the activities of the Fellowship and announces the agenda for its general meetings which will be held in the spring and in the autumn of each year.

FRIENDS undertake:

- (1) To pray for the life and work of the Convention and the Fellowship;
- (2) To seek other committed Christians to join the Fellowship;
- (3) To become better informed about current ethical and theological issues;
- (4) To pay an annual subscription, minimum \$10.00;
- (5) To respond, as circumstances permit, to requests for financial support.

Please cut off along this line and mail to:

Dr. Dorothy M. Lovesey:
P.O. Box 68, Wolfville, N.S. BOP 1X0
Tel.: 902-542-5264

Please enrol me as a FRIEND:

Name & Title

.....

Address

.....

Date Tel:.....

Subscription

FRIENDS OF THE ABF-UPDATE

by Dorothy M. Lovesey

Dear "Friends":

Greetings to you in this beautiful summer of 1995. May every blessing be yours as you travel abroad, greet friends from away and relax in the warm sunny days.

Thanks goes to those who have sent in their subscriptions for 1995 and a kindly reminder to those who have not done so.

"Friends" seem to be engaged in all manner of interesting and wide-ranging activities at this time. Some of these ventures have already borne fruit, others are yet in the making. All are important exacting a deal of effort and dedication. Congratulations first to Professor Eileen Schuller, of McMaster University, on the recent publication of Harper's Bible Commentary of which she is a sub-editor. We were delighted to see a copy on the shelves of a Halifax book-seller a day or so ago. We read a few passages and delighted in them; however we found the price (\$50.00) a trifle daunting!

Roger Prentice, chaplain of Acadia University, is planning another year of activities, one of the highlights of which will be the dedication of the chapel; a service, preceded by a dinner, will take place in the Manning Memorial Chapel at 7:00 pm on Sunday, 10 September 1995.

We welcome home Janet Kirkconnell from two year's teaching in Poland. We anticipate interesting reports of her activities and cannot wait to inspan her into further service.

Recent commemorations of VE and VJ days remind us of Harry Emerson Fosdick's prayerful lines:

Cure Thy children's warring madness;
Bend our pride to Thy control.

...

Grant us wisdom, Grant us courage
Serving Thee whom we adore.

PLEASE JOIN US WE NEED YOU
YOU NEED US