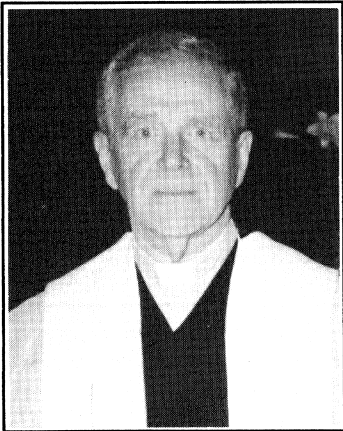


ABF Assembly - 25th Anniversary

September 27 and 28, 1996

Wolfville, Nova Scotia



Friday - September 27

WHEELOCK HALL

6:30 p.m. Registration

7:00 p.m. **25th Anniversary Banquet**

Wheelock Hall Lounge

4-course Roast Turkey Dinner

\$15.00 per person*

Keynote Speaker

Rev. Willis Henderson

Sydney, Nova Scotia

Saturday - September 28

**WOLFVILLE UNITED BAPTIST
CHURCH**

8:30 a.m. **Communion Service**

9:00 a.m. Welcome and Introductions

9:15 a.m. "THE JESUS SEMINAR:-
HELP or HINDRANCE"

Dr. Bruce Matthews

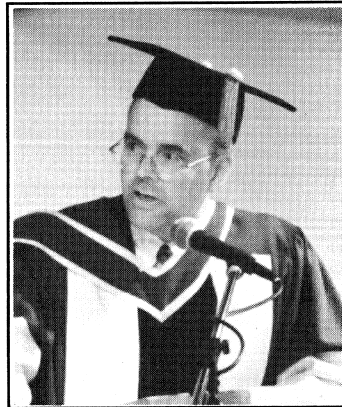
Professor of Comparative Religion,
Acadia University

10:15 a.m. Break

10:45 a.m. Panel/Audience discussion with
Dr. Matthews

Noon Lunch - Freewill offering
Served by the S&B Society,
Wolfville United Baptist Church

After Lunch - Brief Business Session



***TO RESERVE BANQUET TICKETS**

Please telephone Rev. Andrew Crowell, (902) 582-3047 or (902) 582-3227
(leave a message, if necessary)

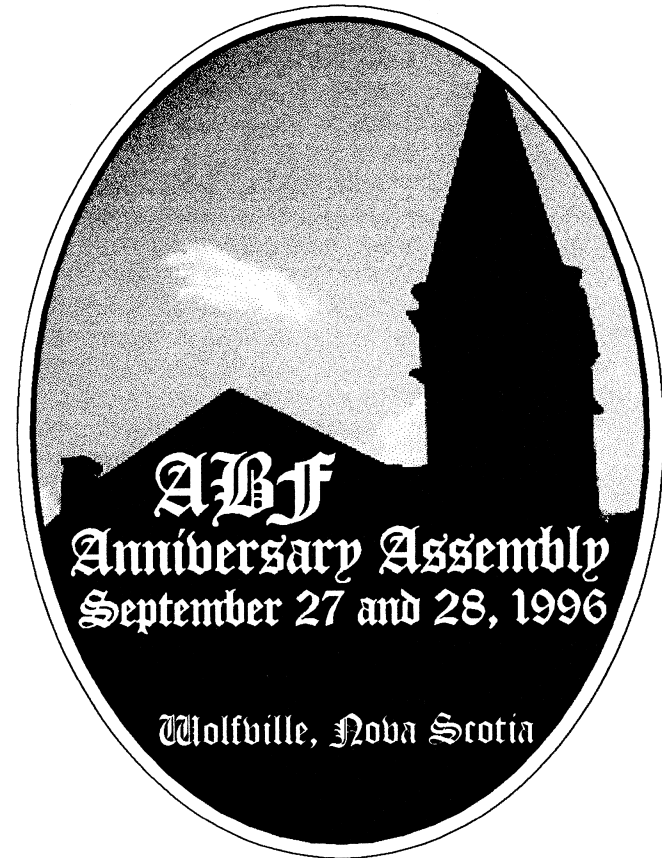
Although some tickets will be available at the door, it is more prudent to reserve.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Nova Scotia Toll-free Information Service 1-800-565-0000

Atlantic **B**aptist **F**ellowship

Bulletin



25th Anniversary Edition

Fall 1996



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Elaine Anne MacGregor

September 27th and 28th: those are two dates that should be circled on your calendar and set aside for attending the 25th anniversary celebration of ABF! The celebration will be held in Wolfville and the format of our gathering will be different than usual. Please see the program printed on the back cover. Part of our celebration will be the recognition of our past. If you served at any time on the executive of the ABF and will be in attendance at the Friday night banquet please contact me ahead of time so that you can be recognized during the evening. My address is, 6332 Edinburgh Street, Halifax, N.S. B3I 1W4; telephone number (902) 454-7206. If you are a person who used to attend ABF but have not done so in awhile, this is the perfect occasion to renew acquaintances and meet new ABF people. If you have never attended ABF, what better time than a celebration to get to know us?

Because the format of this fall Assembly is different, a short business meeting is scheduled after lunch on Saturday. If you have business items that must be discussed at this Assembly, please contact me prior to the Assembly.

These are exciting times for the ABF! We have the presentation of our Motion at the 1997 Atlantic Baptist Convention to plan for, the sending of delegates to the Alliance Convocation in Meridith College, Raleigh, North Carolina on March 13-15, 1997, and the following through on our projects from our spring Retreat.

I look forward to seeing you on September 27th in Wolfville.



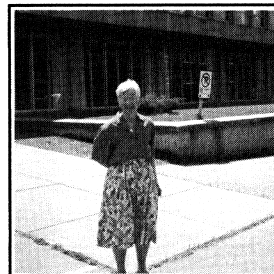
In Attendance at the ASTE Conference, Bible Hill, N.S., June 13, 1996
Timothy McFarland, Margo MacDougall, Jeffrey White, Elaine Anne MacGregor

UBCAP CONVENTION '96 NOTICE OF MOTION

At the 1996 meeting of the United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces, ABF President, Elaine Anne MacGregor, on behalf of the ABF, gave the following Notice of Motion:

This is to advise the 1996 Convention that I will move, or cause to be moved, at the 1997 Convention the following amendments of Article III of the Constitution of the United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces:

- 1) The **deletion** from Article III (1) of:
"and a believer who has been baptized by immersion", and
- 2) the **deletion** from Article III (2) of:
"and a believer who has been baptized by immersion".



Isobel Horton - first in line for
the ABF Anniversary Banquet

ABF to Live It Up at Banquet on September 27th

The program committee has finalized plans for the 25th Anniversary Celebrations of ABF. On Friday, September 27th, a banquet will be held at Wheelock Hall, Acadia University, commencing at 7:00 p.m. Rev. Willis Henderson, Sydney, N.S., and others will address those assembled, and there will be special music and entertainment.

**For reservations telephone Andy Crowell
(902) 582-3047 or (902) 582-3227**

ABF Fall Assembly - September 28th

Dr. Bruce Matthews B.A. (Acadia), M.A. (Oxon), STB (Trinity), PhD (McMaster) will address the fall session of ABF on Saturday, September 28th, at the Wolfville United Baptist Church on the theme: "The Jesus Seminar: Help or Hindrance". Dr. Matthews is the C. B. Lumsden Professor of Religious Studies and Head of the Department of Comparative Religion, Acadia University.

Dr. Matthews is known for his interest in contemporary religions and social developments in South and Southeast Asia. He has travelled widely in these areas, and he has done research and written in both Eastern and Western Journals.

Dr. Matthews will speak at 9:15 a.m.

from the ARCHIVES...

The following articles were included in the first ABF newsletter, **May 21, 1972**, edited by **Roger Prentice**. Thanks to **Mrs. Isobel Horton** for sending the Editor a copy for this Anniversary Issue.

ATLANTIC BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP

Newsletter
1:1
May 21, 1972

CAMP WEGESEGUM

There has been recent concern over the future of Camp Wegesegum, Chipman, N.B. This concern was handed over to be investigated by the Christian Education Committee, by the Executive and Council Meeting in Truro, April 17th.

Camp Wegesegum was originally a M.R.E.C. Camp, and after this Council dissolved it has been held in trust by the Atlantic United Baptist Convention and the Maritime Conference of the United Church of Canada.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

The Organizational meeting of the Atlantic Baptist Fellowship took place at First Baptist Church, Truro, N.S., on October 14, 1971, with Kendall Kenney, Q.C. in the Chair. There were 47 persons in attendance. These people met because of the concern their churches held about issues which were raised at the 1972 United Baptist Convention, held in Sackville, N.B.

It was at this meeting that the Atlantic Baptist Fellowship was formed. This organization is one of congregations, rather than of Ministers, and the laity are deeply involved with making its policies and planning for its future. It was felt that the Fellowship should be an expression of the concerns of various congregations in the Baptist Convention who have found some of the Convention's decisions disappointing and contrary to their ideas of Baptist Principles.

MARGINAL NOTES

Grammateus

Sometimes we Christians, especially when we are preachers, give the impression that we have the "answers" to life's difficult, often tragic, problems. But, more often than we like to think, there are no answers.

This unwelcome truth was illustrated in a story prominently featured in our Canadian press and electronic media in this August of 1996. A twenty-two year old girl, a native Canadian, is pregnant for the fourth time. Of the three children she has already borne, two are suffering brain damage. This was caused because the young mother is addicted to the inhalation of solvents and glue. Her social workers believe that her need for medical treatment is urgent, or her new baby may well be damaged. But the woman refused to be forced to undergo treatment. She was taken to court and the judge ordered treatment in a hospital. She refused the court order but, as this is written, she is "voluntarily" in the hospital and, presumably, under medical care.

Some civil libertarians argue that her civil rights have been taken away. On the other hand it is contended that the unborn, five month old, fetus has rights. Any chance for her or him to live a normal, healthy life demands that the mother be treated. But if the "rights" of the fetus (not a person under current Canadian law) are to be considered, this urgently raises the whole question of abortion. Indeed, if this woman had had an early abortion, we would never have heard of her and I would not be writing this piece!

It is easy enough for us, as moralists, to say (somewhat self-righteously) that if this unmarried young woman had not been sexually active, and had not used drugs, we would not be facing this problem with no answers.

But this raises the whole question of the history and reality of life in Canada for the first Canadians. It is indeed a tragic history. The treatment of aboriginals by their rulers and conquerors (ourselves!) has resulted in sad and tragic consequences -- witness the stories of such communities as Davis Inlet, some urban native ghettos, and the Christian residential schools,

In the public and political domain, our native Canadian fellow-citizens and ourselves have to address this problem. While, alas, it is unlikely that we can now help this unborn child, we must find a way that will make this sad story a less common occurrence.

In the meantime, we can only express our repentance and our love as we encounter the casualties that have emerged from our sorry history. May this young woman, whose name we do not know, and her children, meet compassion and understanding as she and they struggle with the realities of the life they have inherited.

Atlantic Ecumenical Council Meets in Newfoundland/Labrador - October 4-5 1996

REGISTER -

Name _____
Address _____
& phone _____
Church/Council _____

Send, with \$15.00 to the Atlantic Ecumenical Council, Hubert Coombs, 4 Mill Place, Stephenville, NF, A2N 1V2. (709)643-3625

I will require a Billet YES NO

EDITORIAL COMMENT...

Centralize Central Office

1655 Manawagonish Road, Saint John, N.B. That is where you will find (if you're lucky) the headquarters of the UBCAP. The comprehensive review of our total Convention structure to be conducted by the internal Convention Review committee surely will include an examination/evaluation of the present location of our central office. Now is the time to consider a more central location for obvious reasons. Moncton or Amherst seems to make sense.

Shortage of Organists ?

Where have all the organists gone,
long time passing ...

Organists have, over the years, shared the work of the Church's ministry... some for more than 40 - 50 years. Unofficial reports indicate that as organists retire, replacements are becoming more difficult to find, particularly of the same dedication and commitment. It would be interesting to know how serious this situation really is or will be.

Organists have given their time and talents - most without any remuneration whatsoever. They are in the church Sunday after Sunday ... sermon after sermon (think about it) ... and they are there for weddings and funerals and special services. A shortage of organists will present a real problem for many of our small churches and the issue must be addressed soon. Student ministers soon realize how much an organist contributes to his/her training.

Pastors celebrating 60, 55, 50 and 45 years as ordained ministers are recognized at the annual assembly of the AUBC. Why not recognize organists who have served through the years with those pastors (think about it!) ?

Now is the time to honour our organists.

Matthew 22:21

With many Baptist churches seeking and receiving Government grants to employ individuals to do various church-related jobs during the summer, maybe we should take a real good look at the principle of religious liberty - the separation of church and state. Is not the work of the church to be supported by voluntary gifts?

Separation means separation.

Atlantic Baptist Fellowship



within
Convention

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., B0P 1X0.

The **BULLETIN** is mailed free of charge. Donations towards cost of publication are gratefully received and should be mailed to the treasurer:

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

Next Issue:
WINTER BULLETIN 1996

Deadline for submissions:
November 1, 1996

ABF BULLETIN EDITOR

Terry Tingley
9 Youth Camp Road
Bayside, N.S., B3Z 1L8
(902) 852-4405

THE ATLANTIC BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP

A Pilgrimage for Identity: To Be Free and Ecumenical

Phillip G. A. Griffin-Allwood

For many the history of the Atlantic Baptist Fellowship (ABF) is the story of the organization of a fellowship that predates the 1971 Convention assembly. For others, who in 1971 were entering denominational life, the ABF is an agent of formation.

THE PILGRIMAGE IN GENESIS

At the 1979 ABF Fall Conference, Athena Colpitts traced the events that led to the formation of the ABF. At the 1971 annual Convention Assembly held at Mount Allison University, Sackville, N.B., two motions were passed which changed the nature of the United Baptists denomination's life.

By a majority of 61 (242/181; 57.2%), the decision was made that no appointments were to be made by the United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces (UBCAP) to the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) and that no funding, direct or indirect, would be made to the CCC. The second motion, adopted by a majority of 244 (359/115; 75.7%), changed the constitution of the Convention to read that churches could only appoint delegates who had been baptized by immersion.

Reaction against the motions by those who would form the ABF was immediate. Winston Miles moved that the UBCAP withdraw fellowship from the Sydney United Baptist Church, which practiced both openness of membership and participated in ecumenical councils. This motion was defeated by an overwhelming majority.

Response to the above events continued after the Convention had dispersed. An *ad hoc* meeting was held in the Anglican Diocesan Centre in Halifax, on September 15, 1971 at which plans were made for the organizational meeting. It was held in First Baptist Church, Truro, the following October 14. Churches and individuals were invited to join the ABF on the basis of the following resolution:

Being led as we believe by the Holy Spirit, who in our day is moving with renewing power among Christians of all denominational traditions;

And, as Baptists subjected to increasing pressure to control and limit our Christian liberty;

We therefore would associate ourselves 'in an Atlantic Baptist Fellowship which would seek to experience and express, both personally and in the corporate life of our churches, that freedom with which Christ makes us free.

It is our intention to remain within the United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces; and, maintaining our distinctively historic tradition, the Fellowship would promote co-operation with other Christian bodies at all levels.

Initially the organizational structure consisted of a small council with several action committees (Christian Education, Ecumenical Relations, Convention Attendance, Public Relations, Social Service, and Convention Affairs). Eventually the Council size was expanded and committees were appointed as needed.

THE PILGRIMAGE IN PURPOSE

The original five purposes adopted by the ABF illustrate how resolve was carried into action.

- * To proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ through the full ministry of peaching, teaching, and healing for the whole man;

The Spring and Fall Conferences of the ABF are vehicles for the execution of this

purpose. Devotional addresses and the Lord's Supper hold a prominent place at them. The *Newsletter*, and its successor, the *Bulletin*, under the editorship of Roger Prentice, I. Judson Levy, M. R. B. Lovesey, and Terry Tingley have served as mouthpiece for the ABF and as disseminator of information on the "full ministry." Other publications have aided in the carrying out of this purpose; *Discovery from Discussion*, a collection of papers, *Scriptures Then and Now* by J. R. C. Perkin, and the Theological Commission study paper "The Nature of Theology."

- * To preserve religious and soul liberty;
- * To preserve the autonomy of the local churches;

These two purposes can be summarized in the word "freedom." This was a topic for several conferences under the leadership of people such as Dale Moody, Emlyn Davies, M. R. Cherry, and Russell Aldwinckle. The early years were marked by repeated attempts to have the 1971 decisions overturned (except the one about the Sydney Church). These attempts made the ABF position known even in defeat. The ABF provides a place for churches such as the Sydney Church against which the Cape Breton Association passed a resolution disapproving of its faith and practice. The ABF seeks to promote individual freedom by refusing to grant special status to ministers.

- * To promote co-operation among Baptist Churches, and maintaining our historic traditions, to co-operate with other Christian bodies at all levels;
- * To promote the well-being and unity of the United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces

The ABF maintains cordial relations with the Convention leadership; in recent years, meeting regularly with the Executive Minister and President. Convention projects, such as the work in East Wolfville, are promoted. In the early years of conflict, face to face meetings were held with the Evangelical Baptist Fellowship, the organization of those who sponsored the 1971 resolutions, to try and reach an understanding. When Convention nominating committees reports seemed to be unjust, action was taken from the floor. The ABF joined the Atlantic Ecumenical Council and maintains correspondence with the CCC. We have financially supported the Canadian Girls in Training and the Ecumenical Ministry for the Deaf. Ecumenism has been a repeated Conference topic.

THE PILGRIMAGE IN THE IMPERFECT

The pilgrimage of the ABF can be summarized in the two words freedom, and ecumenical obedience; the freedom to seek what it means to be part of a Baptized Church of Jesus Christ and obedience to Christ's ecumenical directive. The early years of the ABF were ones of lobbying for the authority of the local church. Although the 1971 decisions were not reversed, recognition was achieved that the Convention does not have the authority to enforce the regulation concerning delegate selection.

In the mid-1970's the major emphasis of the ABF has focused on ecumenism, particularly during the discussions concerning the creation of a Wider Ecumenical Fellowship. During his period as President, Vin Rushton identified the ABF as an instrument for discussion. In the late 1970's and through the 1980's this discussion has focused increasingly on areas of social justice. In the 1990's association with like minded Baptist groups has occurred as communication was established with the Southern Baptist Alliance.

The lack of denominational turmoil in recent years (although recent debates at Convention assemblies concerning participation in the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada and ordination of women may have signaled an end to the calm) caused the ABF to reexamine its *raison d'être*. It has always been a movement, but in the turmoil of its first decade, institutional expression of dissent was the primary

means of expression. The objectives adopted at the 1985 Spring Conference (below) reaffirm the purposes of the ABF and its nature as a movement and as a special interest group within the UBCAP; that it is a religious community seeking to be faithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

THE ATLANTIC BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP is a community of Baptist churches, laypersons and ordained ministers. It is supported by voluntary contributions made by persons and churches sympathetic to its aims, 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 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 autumn of each year.

Note: This article was published in the BULLETIN, February 1982. Revised 1986; '87; '88; '89; '90; '94. The original includes "Lectures and Discussion Themes".

ABF PRESIDENTS

1971	Kendall Kenny	1981	John Boyd
1972-73	Jack Matthews	1982-83	Gordon Gower
1974-75	Ed Colquhoun	1984-85	Robert Matthews
1976	Reg Dunn	1986-87	Gwen Atherton
1977-78	Vincent Rushton	1988-89	Roger Prentice
1979	Willis Henderson	1990-91	Byron Corkum
1980	Donald Jackson	1992-93	Ed Colquhoun
	1994 - Elaine Anne MacGregor		

ABF BULLETIN EDITORS

1971-74	Roger Prentice	1976-84	I. Judson Levy
1975	V. & J. Rushton	1985-92	M. R. B. Lovesey
	Mary Miles	1993-	Terry Tingley

ABF TREASURERS

1971-77	Winston Miles	1983-88	Evelyn Smith
1978-82	Evelyn Kenney	1989	Don Myers
	1990- John Churchill		

ABF SECRETARIES

1971-74	Daniel Gibson	1984-85	Gwen Atherton
1975	Ruby Thompson	1986	Harold Beaumont
1976-80	Frank Sinnott	1987-89	Phillip Griffin-Allwood
1981	Phillip Allwood	1990-91	Ed Colquhoun
1982	Phillip Griffin-Allwood	1992-95	Derrick Marshall
1983	Donald Jackson	1996-	Jeffery White

ECUMENICAL MODELS FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH

Roger Cann

Part two of a condensation of addresses given by Rev. Dr. Roger Cann at the ABF Spring Assembly, '96 at Amherst, Nova Scotia

The three metaphors, The Household of God, the Body of Christ, and the People of God, do not exhaust the meaning of the Church. I'm more interested in presenting a method of arriving at a Theology of the Church. These metaphors are complementary amplifications of the basic statement, "the Church is the Fellowship of Believers". I find this helpful in a theology of the church and ecumenism, a fellowship characterized by, among other things, a mutuality of love as the Household of God, a unity in functioning as in the Body of Christ, and participation as an agent in the divine plan as the People of God.

Models of Functioning

1. The Witnessing Community

The Church is a body of witnesses. And it is a Witnessing Community. This model represents its structure and expresses an attitude towards its functioning. Witnessing is not just a recounting of bare events, but a proclamation of those events by the community that lives them and is conscious of being shaped by them.



Roger Cann and Byron Corkum

Separation and mission are the two aspects of the call to be a Witnessing Community. The goal as a world reconciled to God. Two temptations constantly threaten the Witnessing Community. One is to consider the separate life, the distinctiveness of the Body, as an end in itself. This produces a ghetto religion, the exclusiveness of the "saved". The other is to lose the identity as the People of God by assimilation into the culture of the day. There must be maintained a sense of being a special people, set apart so that we "may declare the wondrous deeds of

him who called you out of the darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2.9).

The unity within the fellowship "will be seen as consisting in the fact that all are responding to one and the same gospel". That is the glue of the Gospel in the Church. It begs humility on our part when proclaiming the Gospel as you are doing it on behalf of the whole church whether commissioned, or endorsed, or ordained, or not.

2. The Serving Community

The Church imitates Christ, living the life of the servant, renouncing all claims to power, honours, and the like, giving up the rights and privileges, and in powerlessness identifies with the people of the world, ministering to their needs (Phillipians 2.5ff). This is a different perspective on the Church, and on power and the use of power. The Witnessing Church can easily be the authoritarian body, proclaiming the gospel as a divine message to which the world must humbly listen. The Serving Church can not be concerned about power, nor remain static and removed from the society which it serves.

Bonhoeffer: "The Church is the Church only when it exists for others. The Church must share in the secular problems of ordinary human life, not dominating, but helping and serving."

3. Social Justice and Personal Witness

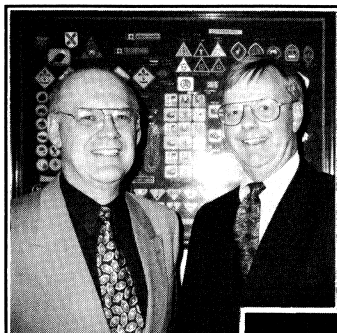
These two models, Witnessing Community and Serving Community, may help to resolve the conflict between "social justice" Christians and "personal witness" Christians. Deeds of compassion are not just bait to lure the gullible into the conversion trap. In speaking the name of Jesus we need to remember that there cannot be justice without love. When we have spoken the word of Justice, we still have not spoken the Word of God fully, the Word of the Gospel. We can only hope to achieve proximate forms of justice, and we must count on good will, forgiveness and love to form a kind of social lubrication to make acceptable the measure of injustice that remains.

The Pilgrim People

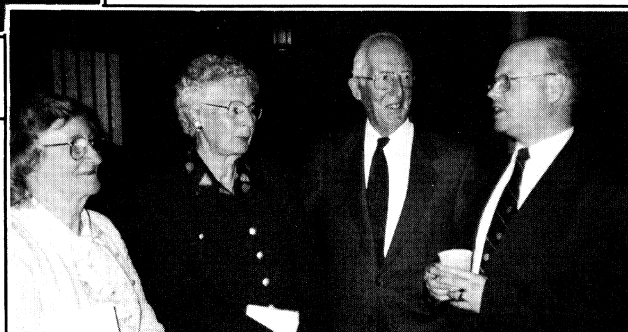
This is not specifically a Biblical image or metaphor. The metaphor of The Pilgrim People suggests a particular aspect of the life of the fellowship. Pilgrims are travelers, who are somewhat alien to their environment and pushing on to a sacred goal. The Church as The Pilgrim People is in the process of becoming.

The Church is an instrument in serving purposes other than its own. Therefore it will always be non-permanent in its composition, form and activity. For pilgrims there is little room for unnecessary baggage. Forms, rites, and organization which impede the movement of the Pilgrim People will have to be adapted, or discarded. The Church is the exodus community, pioneering the future to the world.

We sometimes act as if God has revealed already all forms in which he will shape his shalom. By so acting we cut ourselves off from what God wishes us to fashion for use in the future. As long as we are faithful to our calling as people on the move, strategies of organization and forms of ministry will evolve which are suited to the needs of the moment. When we begin to see ourselves as having arrived, and that patterns of church organization must be beyond questioning and preserved at all cost, then, to that degree, we have lost our way.



Ed Colquhoun and
Allan Jorgensen



Marie McBrien, Eileen and Harold Lusby, Roger Prentice

ABF PHOTO ALBUM

Book Review: Gender, Power, & Promise

Danna Nolan Fewell and David M. Gunn. *Gender, Power, & Promise: The Subject of the Bible's First Story*. Nashville: Abingdon, C1993.

Donald C. Polaski

A title like *Gender, Power, & Promise* might lead one to anticipate jargon-laden prose full of vague, petulant, generalities. Thankfully, this work does not live up to such expectations. A good place to begin thinking about this work is its subtitle: *The Subject of the Bible's First Story*. The focus here is on a story; the approach is explicitly literary. The concern for Fewell and Gunn is not the world which created the Bible's first story (Genesis-2 Kings), but the world which the text constructs. In particular, they focus upon the construction of the male Subject of the story. By "Subject," Fewell and Gunn mean not the topic the text addresses but "the governing consciousness (and unconsciousness), the point of view whose interest the text expresses, or better, constructs" (p. 16). The male Subject of the story can come to expression only by the creation of an Other, the female. These concepts are not simple; yet Fewell and Gunn lay out the Subject and related ideas quickly and lucidly in their first chapter.

Fewell and Gunn have as their goal to read the story "against the grain," so to speak. They want to place the female Other in the spotlight, not only showing how the male Subject of the text defines her but also undermining that definition. Their conclusions are often intriguing, drawing the reader to look again at familiar texts: God in the Garden of Eden has his own set of anxieties and insecurities, Abraham is willing to sacrifice his family for his own gain, Jephthah's daughter violates her father's vow on purpose to expose his self-serving behavior, and Solomon's audience with the Queen of Sheba shows him to be "an incredibly pretentious know-all" (p. 176).

To reach these conclusions, Fewell and Gunn use reading techniques often lumped together under the term "deconstruction." They attend to what the text *doesn't* say, looking for the ideology the text tries to hide. For example, David is never explicitly said to have loved anyone (p. 150). Thus David in all his relationships with Michal, Jonathan, Abigail, Bathsheba, and others operates purely for his own benefit, while he garners the approval of both the story's narrator and YHWH himself.

Fewell and Gunn also find places where the story has "loose threads" which can be used to undermine commonly held interpretations, even the "obvious" meaning of the text. The readings which result are frequently brilliant and always challenging. Is *all* of Sodom worthy of destruction? If so, then where does the cry of distress (Gen 18:20-21) originate? Perhaps with the women and babies destined to be caught in the destruction.

The readings also focus on the function of the bodies of women in the texts, tracing the assertion that "women's bodies, far more often than men's, bear the punishment for insubordination" (p. 16). Nowhere is this clearer than in the case of Jezebel, whose wickedness is remarkably similar in places to David's conduct. Yet as the quintessential Other (both female and foreign), she is trampled into manure, a lesson for women who would operate outside male-defined boundaries (p. 167). Biblical texts such as the graphic description of Jezebel's murder are bound to inspire passionate responses. Fewell and Gunn refuse to adopt a neutral tone with these texts; their anger at violent dimensions of gender relationships shows often.

While their work may lead to liberation in current quests for gender equity (p. 177), Fewell and Gunn frankly admit "we do not know where our reading takes us" (p. 20). In my view, their readings take us into dangerous, yet perhaps ultimately fruitful ground. Fewell and Gunn drag us through texts the Church has long ignored, texts which express graphic and disgusting conduct, with little indication that the narrator (or YHWH) cares. But can one draw into question the text's characterization of God while still keeping the narrative as religiously authoritative? The biggest question which Fewell and Gunn raise for a community committed both to the Bible and opposed to patriarchy is whether we can use the Bible as an authoritative text without replicating its patriarchal ideology. There is no answer here, but reading this book raises the question passionately, inviting us to grapple with these texts.

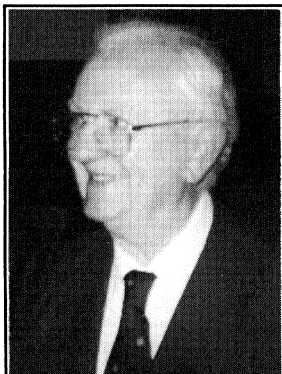
Note: Donald Polaski is a PhD. candidate, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina.

Book Reviews: **The Man in the Scarlet Robe, and The Five Gospels**

McAteer, Michael A. and Michael G. Steinhauser, The Man in the Scarlet Robe: Two Thousand Years of Searching for Jesus.
Etobicoke, Ontario: The United Church Publishing House, 1996.

Funk, Robert W., Roy W-Hoover and The Jesus Seminar. The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus.
New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1993.

M.R.B.Lovesey



M. R. B. Lovesey

Ever since the moment at Caesarea Philippi, on the slopes of Mount Hermon, thinkers have tried to respond to the question of Jesus of Nazareth regarding who he is. The doctrine of the Person of Jesus, or Christology, has evoked many differing estimates from believing followers, skeptics and atheists. Since the evidence for all such constructions is very limited and capable of many understandings, the search for the Jesus of History which lies at the back of the Christ of the Church's Faith has been carried on with heat, many sore hearts and not a few broken heads. The story of the Church's search for a credible Christology has been sketched in McAteer and Steinhauser's Book, The Man in the Scarlet Robe, which must be required reading for all modern Christians of all denominational and non-denominational persuasions.

McAteer, a former religion editor for The Toronto Star, and Steinhauser, a professor of New Testament studies at the Toronto School of Theology, suggest that the modern Church's search for the Historical Jesus has gone through three stages. Under the impetus of the Enlightenment, with its stress on reason and historical, critical investigation, and its refusal to take refuge in fideism, the first stage began with Hermann Samuel Reimarus (1694-1768). This "father of historical Jesus scholarship" described Jesus as a failed messianic pretender and considered the words of the canonical gospels as falsifications. This stage came to an end with the publication of Albert Schweitzer's The Quest for the Historical Jesus (subtitled From Reimarus to Wrede) in 1910. Schweitzer (1875-1965) concluded from his study of the major modern works of the biography of Jesus that all future works of that order would be useless and futile; it is impossible to write the biography of Jesus. Important 19th century books considered by Schweitzer included David Frederick Strauss, The Life of Jesus Critically Examined (published 1835). Strauss claimed one cannot write a life of Jesus since nothing is known of him apart from the Four Gospels which were written by authors who were simply giving their own faith in Jesus. Also considered by Schweitzer was Joseph Ernest Renan's Life of Jesus, published in 1863. This caused a sensation since it stripped Christianity of supernaturalism and regarded Jesus as simply a human being.

Our authors label the period immediately following Schweitzer the "No Quest" period. It was an interlude dominated by the extreme historical skepticism of Rudolf Bultmann (1884-1976), who taught that since the Gospels were written after Jesus' resurrection they could not be used as data for the historical Jesus.

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The second stage of the Quest of the Historical Jesus began in the early 1950's with the feeling among many of Bultmann's former students and disciples, who reacted against his extreme historical skepticism, that more reliance can be placed on the Gospels from the historical point of view than Bultmann was able to give them. Gunther Bornkamm's book, Jesus of Nazareth, (1956) sparked a new research and inspired several like works.

The "Third Quest" for the Jesus of History began in the early 1970's and in very recent years has hit the pages of popular magazines and newspapers. The Society of Biblical Literature's Seminar on the Parables of Jesus reawakened interest in North America in the Historical Jesus, as did its 1985-89 Seminar on "Q" (a collection of the sayings of Jesus thought to be incorporated in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke). Most important of all has been the work of the "Jesus Seminar." In 1985, Robert W. Funk and John Dominic Crossan founded the Jesus Seminar to begin a new assessment of the Gospels, including the recently discovered Gospel of Thomas. This Gospel of Thomas is a sayings collection of Jesus similar to Q, and is as important for New Testament studies as the Dead Sea Scrolls have been for the study of the Old Testament. This Jesus Seminar, with meetings twice a year has drawn together upwards of 200 participants. Some are designated "Fellows," that is established academic scholars with PhD's, others are "Associates," that is interested non-specialists. The number includes about equal numbers of Roman Catholics, Protestants and Non-religious - many are male and many are ordained. No fundamentalists have participated for any length of time. A few Southern Baptists took part in the early days until pressure from their denomination forced their withdrawal.

In 1993 the Jesus Seminar published the results of its inquiry into the search for the authentic words of Jesus. It tried honestly to deal with the question, What did Jesus really say? The book deals with the text adopted for study, gives a translation into English, and states the principles of historical research adopted. This important book is now being studied by theological students of all persuasions. The Seminar promises a second volume that will deal in the future with its investigations into the acts and miracles of Jesus.

The author of this essay recalls that when he was a theological student at Oxford in the immediate post-WW2 period, one of his theological professors, H.E.W. Turner by name, used to say that when he was a student at Oxford about the only book he really studied in any depth was B.H. Streeter's The Four Gospels.

One may be permitted to hope that modern theological students will study The Five Gospels with a similar dedication and come to some conclusions about it.

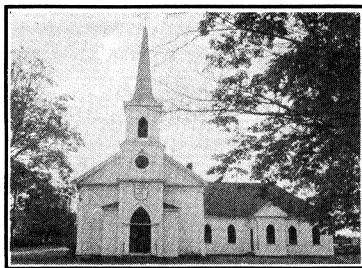
Dr. M. R. B. Lovesey is a former Professor at the Atlantic Divinity College and Editor of the ABF BULLETIN between 1985 to 1992.

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PLACES WE WORSHIP: Parrsboro UBC

Jeffrey G. White



Parrsboro United Baptist Church

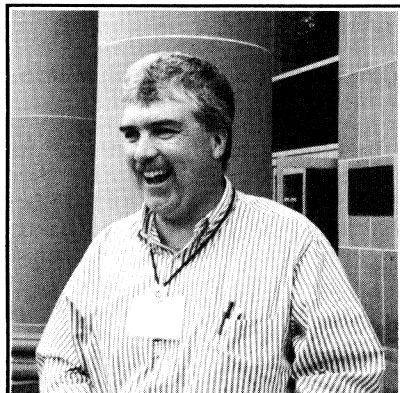
In Cumberland county, Nova Scotia, along the beautiful Glooscap Trail can be found three historic church buildings -- in Parrsboro, in Diligent River, and in Port Greville. Standing about 10 kilometers apart these are the homes of three congregations that have been in partnership sharing their ministers since 1931. The Diligent River Church is the oldest of the three, its organization dating back to September 24, 1857, with fourteen charter members. The next year the present building was built, not far from the spectacular views of Cape Split and the shores of

Kings county that continue to attract people. From the Baptists that met at this picturesque spot the congregations of Parrsboro and Port Greville arose, in 1859 and 1883 respectively.

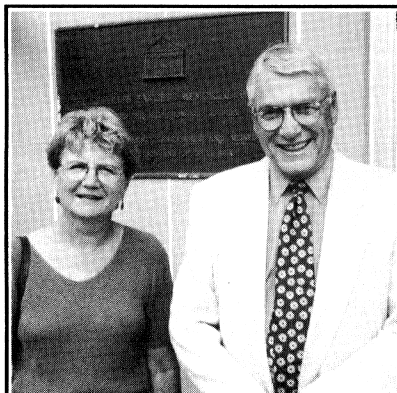
The Parrsboro church building dates back to 1860, with several additions and changes occurring from time to time. The most recent project of this type, undertaken by the three congregations together, was the replacement of the adjacent parsonage, c. 1897, with a new, more affordable home, dedicated in 1995. The new building stands at the same location. The congregation supports a strong Sunday School program, and is rich in musical talent, as are the other two congregations. The Parrsboro United Baptist Church is in the process of *Discovery*, a program of the UBCAP aimed at helping rural churches evaluate, plan for the future, and set new goals.

The cornerstone of the present Port Greville United Baptist Church was laid on May 29, 1913. Within view of some of the outstanding blueberry fields of Cumberland county, the church serves communities that were very prominent in the shipbuilding era. This church cooperates with the local United Church of Canada in a Sunday School program. Along with the churches in Diligent River and Parrsboro, it stands as a reminder along this beautiful and rugged shoreline, that God still speaks and leads the people.

150th Annual Assembly : AUBC In Ministry Together : 1846 - 1996



Phillip Griffin-Allwood, soon to be Minister of the Kentville UB Church



United Church Ministers
Lois and Hubert Bartlett

FRIENDS OF THE ABF - UPDATE

Doris Hilchey



Doris Hilchey

Dear Friends:

Greetings in this beautiful and bountiful summer. Wherever your are, vacationing or working, may God's blessing rest on you and your activities.

Some of you I now know as both friend and "Friend"; many more I hope to be able to count as both as I undertake to continue the work Dr. Dorothy Lovesey has carried on so faithfully and effectively over the past eight years. That will take dedication and patience, I know, and most of all, obedience to the Lord's leading.

This is not really an update, but a starter seeking your continued active support of the ABF through your dues (thanks to those who have sent in their 1996 subscriptions, and a gentle reminder to those who have not yet done so); through your letters and

updates on "Friends" and on activities of interest and concern to us all; and through your efforts to encourage others to become "Friends".

Let us make this 25th Anniversary year one worthy of celebration and the Assembly at Wolfville Baptist Church September 27th and 28th a must on your calendar.

Friends of the Atlantic Baptist Fellowship

FRIENDS are sympathetic to the aims of the ABF. **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 along this line and mail to:

Miss Doris Hilchey
1740 Vernon Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3H 3N2.

PLEASE ENROL ME AS A FRIEND!

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