

# ABF Fall Assembly



**Fort Williams United Baptist Church**  
**October 2nd and 3rd, 1998**

**Programme**  
**Friday, October 2nd**

- 6:30 p.m. Registration
- 7:00 p.m. Welcome: ABF President and Host Minister
- 7:15 p.m. Introduction of Guest Speaker
- 7:30 p.m. First Presentation:  
**"Educating Clergy and Laity, Theologically**  
**Dr. Furman Hewitt, Professor of Religious Studies - Duke University**
- 8:20 p.m. Break
- 8:30 p.m. Holy Communion with Minister and Deacons of Host Church
- 9:00 p.m. Refreshments

**Saturday, October 3rd**

- 9:00 a.m. Welcome
- 9:05 a.m. Worship
- 9:25 a.m. Introduction of Guest Speaker
- 9:30 a.m. Second Presentation: **Dr. Furman Hewitt**
- 10:30 a.m. Refreshment Break
- 11:00 a.m. Panel Discussion: Chair Andy Crowell with  
 Panelists: Rev. Carol Anne Janzen  
 Ms. Elaine Anne MacGregor  
 Rev. Dr. Timothy Ashley
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch at the Church
- 1:00 p.m. Business Meeting

**A**tlantic **B**aptist **F**ellowship

## Bulletin



Janet Atwood, Hebron, and Katherine MacPherson, Chester Basin, in attendance at the ABF Spring Assembly, June 6.



Marjorie and Sheldon Fountain participated in the Official Opening and Service of Dedication of the Gladys M. Manning Retirement Residence (second phase), College road, Windsor, N.S. June 6.

Fall 1998

## President's Message

Paul Burden

I want to express my appreciation and the thanks of the ABF for all the work and planning of First Baptist Halifax that went to make the Spring Assembly such a success. Their hospitality was much appreciated by the group in attendance.

On July 26th I had the opportunity to visit and speak to the congregation of Bayside Baptist Church. Carol Ann and I were most warmly received and had a wonderful time. Thank you to Terry Tingley and the members of this church for a moving experience.

In the continuing saga of our notice of motion to Convention. We had decided at our business meeting in June, in light of the proposals being brought forward by the committee to revamp the Atlantic United Baptist Convention, that we would withdraw the notice of motion. Elaine Anne MacGregor received word that under the rules of order, we may not withdraw. Further, if we do not make our motion, anyone can from the floor. The council met to decide how to deal with this issue.

Another decision made at our June meeting was to institute a membership fee. This is to help to defray costs of assemblies and to determine voting rights. Look for more on this in the future. As always, your input is welcome.

We also had some discussion about building ties with Baptists in Cuba. I had established contact with a delegation at the Alliance of Baptists Convocation in Washington. Perhaps we could organize a trip to Cuba in the near future. If anyone is interested in pursuing this please let me know.

An ABF council meeting was held on Wednesday, August 19th at the Acadia Chapel in Wolfville. Topics included our notice of motion, membership fees, a possible youth program and Cuba.

I hope everyone is having a wonderful summer. I look forward to seeing you soon.



Linda Macintosh, Halifax and  
ABF President Paul Burden (sister and brother)  
pictured during a break at the Spring Conference.



## There Is A Book . . .

J.R.C. Perkin appreciates a new book about Victorian hymnody

Hymns have formed a part of Christian worship from the earliest days of the church. The first Christians were also Jews and modelled their worship on that of the synagogue, a pattern which included prayer, reading of scripture (the Old Testament), exposition, and the use of the psalms. Because there were Christian fellowships before there were Christian writings (put another way, there were churches before there was a New Testament), it is not surprising that some hymn-like compositions, shaped by years of worship, are found in the scriptures - see for example Luke 1:46-55 and 2:29-32, and Philippians 2:5-11.

Poetry and music appeal to many at a deeper level than explanation and exhortation; this may account for the major role played by hymns in the continuing story of the church around the world. At no point has hymn singing been more influential than in England during Queen Victoria's long reign (1837-1901). During those years not only did Baptists, Congregationalists and Methodists increasingly use hymns in regular worship and revival meetings, but Anglicans, including many of High Church persuasion, wrote and used hymns as vehicles of praise, confession and dedication.

The influential role of hymns in the nineteenth century has long been known to historians and students of theology and liturgy, but the average worshipper in the late twentieth century is probably content to sing familiar words and tunes, without giving much thought to authors, composers and circumstances. For those who wish to know the background a delightful new book may enrich our knowledge and enable us, to a greater degree, to "sing with the understanding also," as Paul says in I Corinthians 14: 15.

The book is *Abide With Me: The World of Victorian Hymns* [SCM Press, 1997]; the author is Dr Ian Bradley of the Department of Divinity, Aberdeen University, Scotland. Dr Bradley studied History at New College, Oxford, and subsequently wrote a D.Phil thesis on the religious/political history of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. He has written more than twenty books, including *The Penguin Book of Hymns* (1989), and is currently at work on *The Penguin Book of Carols*.

*Abide With me* is a scholarly work, documented by hundreds of footnotes and supported by an excellent bibliography. The author's comprehensive knowledge of hymnody is matched by his professional awareness of the context from which the hymns arose and how they influenced the Victorian era - its worship, its family life, and its literature. But the book is eminently readable and reflects the author's personal background and experience. The opening sentence of the Preface entices the reader to continue: "Hymns played much the same role in Victorian culture that television and radio soap operas do today." For nearly seven pages the parallels and differences are pursued, subtly drawing the reader into the world of Victorian homes and churches.

In Dr Bradley's book we meet the enthusiastic but amateurish "west gallery bands," who willingly and sometimes beerily accompanied the singing of the psalms until replaced by barrel organs with a repertoire of about twenty tunes; in due course organs were installed and robed choirs introduced, both creating considerable controversy.

When hymn singing became more common it enabled the congregation to participate more fully in worship. The use of the same words and tunes in society churches and revival halls regardless of denomination "brought a new egalitarian and ecumenical dimension to worship." The chapter on "Musical and cultural influences" discusses the efforts and notes the work of such outstanding individual musicians as John Goss, William Crotch (first Principal of

(continued on page 4)

(continued from page 3 - **There Is A Book . . .**)

the Royal Academy of Music), William Havergal, S. S. Wesley, and Sir Frederick Gore Ouseley (founder of St Michael's College, Tenby Wells as a "model choir school") in raising the general level of congregational music and choral singing.

While the book is full of references to Victorian hymn writers, one section (chapter 4, "For all the Saints who from their labours rest") is devoted to this theme. The writers came from a wide cross-section of the population; they included Professors of Poetry, distinguished scholars, schoolmasters, politicians, clerics in rural charges, and Scottish Presbyterian ministers. Nor are the many women writers overlooked, from the frail Adelaide Anne Procter to the robust and prolific Cecil Frances Alexander. This chapter, perhaps more than any other section of the book, illustrates how important hymns were. Yet even in this setting some hymns enjoyed only modest popularity until royal approval moved them into the category of "favourite". Such was the case with John Ellerton's "The day thou gavest." Written for missionary meetings in 1870, its selection by Queen Victoria for her diamond jubilee celebrations in 1897 gave it a popularity it still maintains.

There is a discussion of "How the Victorians viewed hymns" and of the unrivalled place held by such verses as "Rock of Ages," "Jesus, Lover of my Soul," and "Our God, our Help in Ages Past." Hymns were an important part of funeral services, a powerful medium for preaching the message of salvation, and an influential vehicle for doctrinal statement.

Space does not allow a summary of the book or even reference to some of the many fascinating stories and opinions it contains. Dr Bradley's list of 100 Victorian hymns that should be in any self respecting modern hymnal could be the basis of a thoughtful and vigorous discussion. But mention must be made of the final Chapter "Victorian hymns in the twentieth century," and the author's observation that "Victorian hymns are high on the hit list of the politically correct... (241) He recognizes that the present emphasis on brevity and immediate comprehensibility has led to some unfortunate revisions of Victorian hymns which often ". . . ooze subtlety and mystery and are packed with ambiguities and nuances . . . Those that are rewritten to remove perceived archaism often end up being robbed of their resonance and reduced to banality." (243) The last paragraph of Dr Bradley's text begins "We are acutely conscious of the brutalized nature of contemporary society . . . there is a close relationship between the kind of music that we sing and listen to and our social attitudes and behaviour. (246)

Without reservation I commend Dr Bradley's book to the churches generally and especially to worshippers "in Quires and Places where they sing. . ."

Dr. J.R.C. Perkin is retired and residing in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. He was president of Acadia University, 1981 - 1993.

## Canadian Baptist Ceases Publication

After 144 years, *The Canadian Baptist* will be replaced by a quarterly newsletter (same name). A church task force recommended ceasing publication, developing newsletters, and using electronic media.

## Editorial Comment . . .

### Selective Interpretation of the Bible?

At its annual meeting in June, the Southern Baptist Convention added an article on the family, paraphrased from Ephesians 5:22-33 and 6:1-4, to the statement of faith for 15.9 million members - USA's largest Protestant denomination.

*"A wife is to submit graciously to the servant leadership of her husband, even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ."*

--New 18th Article of the Baptist Faith and Message

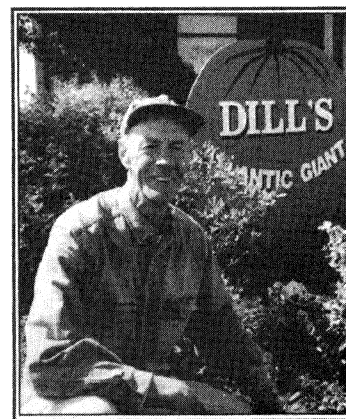
Supporters claim the new article is a result of legitimate concern for the family. Religious critics see it as an attack on equality between men and women, and reinforcement for belief in biblical inerrancy. What think ye?

### Convention Review Committee (CRC)

The CRC believed the recommendations proposed to the Annual Convention Assembly in August requires a change in the way we see ourselves. Perhaps then, we will see the position Executive Minister changed to Chief Executive Officer (CEO) - filled by either a member of the clergy or laity. Then there would be some hope that a woman would have some possibility of becoming Convention's CEO.

### People We Meet

Howard Dill is affectionately referred to as "The Pumpkin King". Thousands visit his seed and information centre at his farm on College Road, Windsor, N.S.



Howard Dill

Most are familiar with Howard's record-size pumpkins over the past 20 years. He has been featured in The Guinness Book of Records, Ripley's Believe It or Not, international magazines and newspapers, and he has appeared on USA and Canadian television programs. His name is in the World Pumpkin Confederation Hall of Fame. He holds the patent for the seed that produces the world's largest pumpkin variety, the Atlantic Giant hybrid.

Most are also familiar with Howard's fundamental belief - "you can have the best seed in the world but if you don't have a combination of the proper soil and Mother Nature you're not going anywhere".

What many didn't know is the amount of time Howard gives to his willingness to assist charitable organizations or causes. Donated seeds or pumpkins are used in countless fundraising/competition events.

Howard's vision for the year 2000 is a 1000 pound pumpkin (Maybe on the moon?)

Visitors to the Dill centre also have an opportunity to examine one of the best private collections of hockey memorabilia found anywhere. Howard's other passion!

His wife, Hilda, is administrator of the Gladys M. Manning Memorial Retirement Residence, just down the road from the Dill farm. Hilda sows seeds of kindness there.

# Dispensationalism

Stuart Frayne



Dr. Stuart Frayne

This brief article is prompted by Dr. Morris Lovesey's re-reading of Edmund Gosse's Father and Son; the account of Gosse's upbringing in the home of his Plymouth Brethren father. As a small boy I was taken to the local Plymouth Brethren Gospel Hall three times each Sunday. It was there that I was introduced to Dispensationalism.

Visiting preachers used to bring large impressive charts about fourteen by ten feet which depicted the whole sweep of history from the Garden of Eden to the new Jerusalem. I was in awe of these preachers and I tried to make sense of their diagrams. There

were little pin figures - all of them heading for eternity. Some swooped up into the heavens; those less fortunate dived into the eternal flames. I feared lest I be among the latter. To make sure that this didn't happen I was "saved" when I was seven years of age. I did not know it but I was a young Dispensationalist.

Many fundamentalists are fed a steady diet of Dispensationalism but do not know what it is! Notable recent exponents of this scheme of things are Jimmy Swaggart and Jack Van Impe but this system of biblical interpretation originated with John Nelson Darby (1800 - 1882), an Irish cleric who renounced his orders and became one of the founders of the Plymouth Brethren. Plymouth, England was one of the main centres for this sect.

Dispensationalism provides a frame of reference for making sense of diverse and complex biblical material: a system for dealing with every segment of the Bible by labelling it and allocating it an appropriate place in a comprehensive grid.

Dispensationalists in Canada found stimulus for their ideas in the Niagara Bible Conferences late in the nineteenth century. John Nelson Darby had himself visited Canada and the United States several times between 1859 and 1874. On this continent one of Darby's devoted followers was C.I. Scofield who produced a reference Bible bearing his name. He interspaced his own notes and headings between the text of the King James version and implied authority for both. "Dispensational Truth" was a system scarcely to be found until Darby came along. Oswald J. Smith declared earlier biblical interpretations to be virtually worthless.

In March 1920 Clarence Larkin published his monumental book, Dispensationalist Truth. The cover bore the more pretentious title, "The Greatest Book On Dispensational Truth In The World." In it, through numerous diagrams and interspersed commentary, he describes the "seven thousand years of human history". They are divided into "ages" - also called "dispensations". The two thousand year span from Eden (B.C. 4000) to Abraham is labelled "**CONSCIENCE**"; the next two thousand years from Abraham (B.C. 2000) to Christ is called "**LAW**"; the two thousand years, from Christ to Antichrist (A.D. 2000) is "**GRACE**" and is the "**CHURCH AGE**"; from Antichrist to the end of Satan is the seventh thousand years: the Millennium, described in Revelation 20: 1 - 10, is taken literally and projected into the future in this way. In addition, at the end of the Church age the "**TRIBULATION**" occurs. It is followed by the Second Coming in Larkin's scheme. Other dispensationalists differ and place the Second Coming before the Tribulation. Our forbears used to debate such matters vehemently.

Prophecy, Larkin says, is "history in advance." He says two thirds of scripture is prophetic. He means, it is predictive. More than half of it points to events even

now still in the future. As for the present the Antichrist is at hand. He has been variously identified in the past. For example, Napoleon had been seen as the Antichrist. Many prophecies were fulfilled in the First Coming of Christ; the remainder, it is claimed, will be carried out in the future, including the Second Coming.

Hal Lindsey's **THE LATE GREAT PLANET EARTH**, published in 1970, had an enormous impact. Many passages are cited, from various parts of the Bible, as predictions that the end of the world is coming soon. Russia is the Gog of the land of Magog; Japan and China are the Kings of the East; the European Common Market is the beast with the ten horns of Daniel 7. Other dispensationalist writers had identified Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots of the book of Revelation, as the Roman Church. The Papacy is said to be the Whore of Revelation 17. However, for Lindsay the great harlot is "one world religion", apostate, ecumenical and corrupt. Any Day the Rapture will occur - he calls it "the ultimate trip" - and believers will be caught up to meet Christ in the air. "Perhaps", says Lindsay, "the sign of the Son of Man will be a gigantic celestial image of Jesus flashed upon the heavens for all to see."

There have been many critics of dispensationalism. Modern scholars who accept the validity of historical - critical study of the scriptures find dispensationalism incredible and virtually incoherent. For example, James Barr's assessment is that "Darby - Scofield dispensationalism is a remarkable achievement of the mythopoeic fantasy..., a truly remarkable feat of the imagination. But Barr also considers it "thoroughly destructive of a Christian understanding of the Bible." He adds, "The whole dispensational framework is, in a certain mad way, an attempt to cope with problems and facts that are being dealt with by critical study at the same time in a completely different mental world."

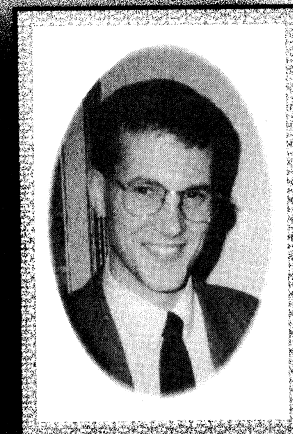
Dr. Stuart Frayne is Minister Emeritus of the Burlington Baptist Church, Ontario. A former Professor of Preaching at McMaster Divinity College, he retired in 1992. Stuart and his wife, Eileen, live in Grimshaw, Alberta (P.O. Box 1016 - T0H 1W0).

## Called of God

... soon to be ordained ...



Stella Smith  
Milton Pastorate



Jeffrey White  
Parrsboro Pastorate

## Book Review

M.R. B. Lovesey

John Shelby Spong. Why Christianity Must Change Or Die: A Bishop Speaks to Believers in Exile. Harper San Francisco, A Division of Harper Collins, Publishers, 1998, 258 pp, \$18.00.

Bishop Spong, the controversial Bishop of the Episcopal (Anglican) diocese of Newark New York for the past quarter of a century, has given us a book in the tradition of E.W. Barnes (Bishop of Birmingham, whose book Should Such a Faith Offend? was published in 1927) and James A. Pike (Bishop of California, whose apologia for his faith, If This Be Heresy, was given to the Christian public in 1967). He, Spong, addresses those in Christendom who might be termed "thinkers," realising that others, doubtless the majority, the "feelers" and the "doers," would not be interested in his programme of updating Christian faith and practice. The latter, the majority group, is often quite satisfied with both traditional pre-modernist versions and the naive belief that the truth of Christianity is enshrined for all eternity in the great creeds of the early Church.

Spong's new book gathers together all the wisdom he has gained over the years. Much of the material he has written in his former publications (see for example Living in Sin? A Bishop Rethinks Human Sexuality, 1988; Rescuing the Bible from Fundamentalism: A Bishop Rethinks the Meaning of Scripture, 1991; Born of a Woman: A Bishop Rethinks the Virgin Birth and the Role of Women in a Male-Dominated Church, 1992; This Hebrew Lord: A Bishop's Search for the Authentic Jesus, revised edition 1993; Resurrection: Myth or Reality? A Bishop's Search for the Origins of Christianity, 1994; Liberating the Gospels: Reading the Bible with Jewish Eyes, 1996) are drawn on in this latest book to come from his pen. One feels that Spong's books should be required reading for all candidates for the service of the Church today, and also for the members of Ordination Councils responsible for admitting or rejecting candidates for ordination.

Bishop Spong's thought has been shaped, so he confesses, by his interaction with the faculties of the great theological institutions of America and Europe. He claims that his understanding of the history of ideas is based on a long line of savants, beginning with Copernicus and Galileo, and leading on through Thomas Aquinas to Charles Darwin, Sigmund Freud, Albert Einstein, and latterly Richard Dawkins.

Bishop Spong also confesses his indebtedness to various leaders of Christian thought he has met in his pilgrimage. He, for instance, refers to John Elbridge Hines, the presiding Bishop of the Episcopal (Anglican) Church in the United States from 1964 to 1973, who "exhibited the courage of his convictions sufficient to lead Christianity to places it had never been before and who had the grace and integrity to undergo vilification without responding negativity." Among a long list of individuals referred to by Spong this reviewer was interested to see the names of J. A. T. Robinson, Michael Goulder, and Karen Armstrong.

In a recent radio interview over CBC, Bishop Spong gave his purpose in life as "Breathing new life into old ways of thinking." He seeks to be a resource for the religious seekers of our world who yearn to believe in God but who are also repelled by the pre-modern literalizations that so frequently masquerade as Christianity. Today's Christianity, he argues, must recapture Christianity for a post-modern world. It's no use shouting pre-modern symbols; we have to separate the experience of Christ from the explanation of the experience formerly given. Spong wishes to cling to the experience for ever, but wants to find words that can communicate, that are not going to be immediately rejected as non-sensible by the educated man or woman of this century.

Bishop Spong questions many items of dogma held dear by conservative Christians, such as the inerrancy of the Bible, the doctrine of the Virgin Birth of

(continued from page 8 **Book Review**)

Christ, the penal substitutionary doctrine of the Atonement, the physical Resurrection, the Ascension. To illustrate the ways in which Spong deals with the traditional dogmas of Christianity we might consider briefly his understanding of the Virgin Birth. He argues that the first century view of genetics assumed that the whole life of the infant was genetically present in the sperm of the male. The birth narratives in Matthew and Luke therefore in order to assert Jesus' divine origin had only to displace the male, for the female was believed to offer nothing since the womb served, it was thought, as a kind of incubator. That story if literalized can make no sense at all in a world that understands the genetic processes of both males and females quite differently. The framers of the birth narratives did not know about egg cells (nor did anybody else before 1728) and the way zygotes are formed genetically.

Bishop Spong calls himself "a believer in exile." This is a reference to the story of the Babylonian Captivity of Israel in the sixth century BCE. Like the captives he wonders how he can sing Yahweh's song in a foreign land (Psalm 137). Like them the world has changed -- it looks different and he finds it impossible to revert to pre-modern paradigms of thought.

Bishop Spong is not alone in this, for there are many in Christendom who feel the same. The present reviewer was interested to discover that the current Anglican Bishop of St. Albans, Hertfordshire, in whose diocese, he, the reviewer was nurtured in the early years of his earthly pilgrimage, is one of them. While addressing, early this year, a group of Christian leaders in his diocese, Bishop Christopher stressed the fact that much Christian dogma is not accepted by contemporary Britishers. The desperate need of today is for leaders who know their theology and who are able to give a reason for the hope that is within them. He appealed to leaders to work hard at their theology.

Wheeler Robinson, the Baptist Old Testament scholar, in the beginning of his classic book, The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament (1913), says there is an ethical dimension in Christian scholarship which must always be observed. He says we ought not to condemn advanced Christian thought until we have laboured to understand it. "We must be patient enough to let the evidence overcome our prejudices. Critical study can be a moral as well as an intellectual test, and it is perilously easy to deny what 'we have never laboured to understand." So, let us labour to understand what Bishop Spong laboured to tell us, and to evaluate it sanely, for he, like all of us, is a believer that Kurios Iesous, Jesus is Lord.

### The Gathering

Saturday, October 31, 1998

#### First Baptist Church

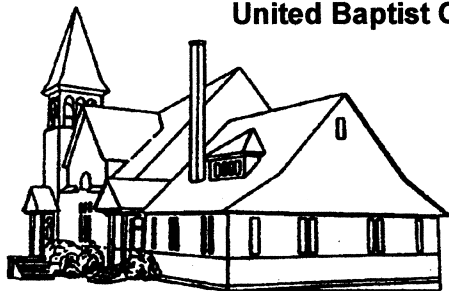
603 Adelaide Street, Woodstock, Ontario

Register by October 26th: \$10.00 for Members ~ \$15.00 for non-Members  
(includes lunch and travel costs of speaker)

Gary and Merle Caldwell,  
2464 Concession 2 West,  
R.R. #1 Lynden, Ontario L0R 1T0  
Telephone: (519)7647-3504 or  
E-mail: caldwell@cujo2.icom.ca

## Places Where We Worship ...

### United Baptist Church, Canning, Nova Scotia



#### Andy Crowell

From 1845 to the present the Canning Area has had three Baptist Churches.

These three churches in many ways, represent a "Microcosm" of what was happening denominationally throughout the region prior to and including the time of the basis of Union in 1905.

The first of these Baptist Churches in our area, was in Habitant. It was erected in 1847. It was a large square building with a gallery across the south side, and a high pulpit.

In 1871 another meeting house was established near Canning (where the Post Office is now). The building, which was previously used for a "threshing house" (where people for miles around would come to have their grain separated,) was converted to a place of worship. The dedication of this new worship site took place on July 10th, 1872 and the sermon was preached by the Reverend T. H. Crowell.

In 1905, the Baptist congregations of Habitant (the "Free" Baptists) and Canning (the "Regular" Baptists) came together to form the Canning United Baptist Church. From 1905 to 1911, the services of the "united" churches were held in the Free Baptist meeting house (Habitant), after which the third Baptist Church building was erected in order to better serve both congregations. The present United Baptist Church on North Avenue in Canning was dedicated on March 12, 1911. The dedication sermon was preached by the church's first minister, the Reverend Edwin Crowell (my great-grandfather!)

At present the church continues to be active in worship, teaching, fellowship and service. It is committed to an inter-church witness and offers of itself in many community and pastoral needs. Currently, it is the place I call home, and indeed, the place wherein I worship God.



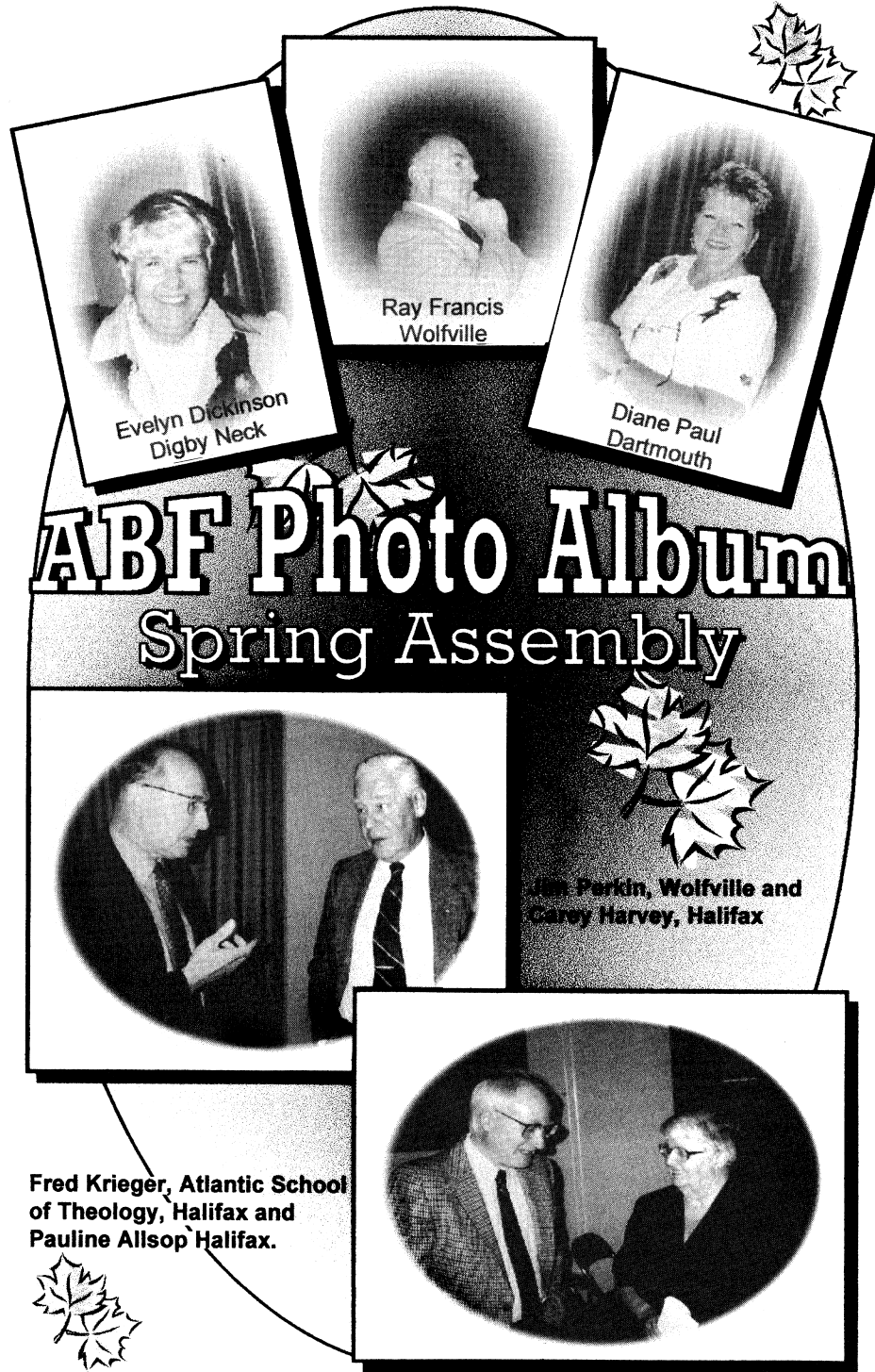
### 1923-1998 : Camp Wegesegum

"an interchurch Christian Community"

The Annual Meeting of Camp Wegesegum was held August 15th at the campsite, Chipman, N.B. Members discussed the future direction of the camp and agreed to:

- ~ establish committees with a mandate to perform specific tasks;
- ~ establish lines of communication with interested young adults;
- ~ engage stimulating spiritual leaders to develop Camp Programs;

And seek a meeting as soon as possible with the representatives of the AUBC and the MCUCC to discuss the future development of Camp Wegesegum and plan accordingly.



Fred Krieger, Atlantic School of Theology, Halifax and Pauline Allsop Halifax.

## Marginal Notes

### Grammateus

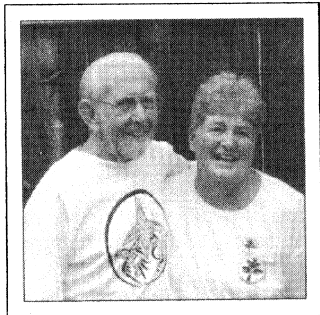
A Baptist Convention is not a Baptist Church. I cannot "belong" to the UBCAP or the BCO&Q or the BUWC. I belong to the local Baptist church of which I am a member. If my church elects me, I can be a delegate to transcongregational assemblies or committees. Associations, Conventions, and even larger bodies have been founded so that individual churches can participate in missionary, educational or social reform agenda beyond the fiscal and talent capabilities of local churches. It is true that as the bureaucracies associated with transcongregational institutions burgeon a growing "denominational" sense develops and various positions and offices can become entrenched.

In pre-Confederation Canada two church/state issues developed. The Constitutional Act of 1791 provided that one seventh of the crown lands should be reserved for the use of "the Protestant clergy." Such Anglican officers as Bishop Strachan interpreted this to mean "the Anglican clergy." Later this was broadened to include Church of Scotland clergy. But the whole concept of ecclesiastical preferment was strenuously opposed by members of dissenting denominations; prominent among them were Baptist leaders. They succeeded in abolishing the clergy reserves. The same forces opposed the founding of the University of Toronto as an Anglican establishment and they fought for a non-credal university. University College (the so-called "godless college") was founded in 1853. Baptist leaders, among others, insisted that freedom of religion necessitated freedom from religion!

Both of these issues were confronted and resolved long before Baptists in central Canada organized themselves into the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec in 1889.

Alliances, Associations, Conventions –exist to serve and help the local church. They are not of the essence of the Church of Jesus Christ. They can come or go, wax or wane, but the covenanted fellowship of believers testifying that Jesus is Lord, is the eternal "rock" community.

## 75th Anniversary of Church Camping at Wegesegum August 14-16



Garnet "Red" Sherwood  
Kaleden, B.C. and  
Yan Storr, Truro, N.S.,  
member Board of Directors



Dawna Crosby,  
Fredericton, N.B.  
Chair, Board of Directors  
Camp Wegesegum Inc.

In attendance at  
Reunion

## Book Review

Allison A. Trites

William H. Brackney, Christian Voluntarism Theology and Praxis, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.

This book, as part of the "Faith's Horizons" series, seeks "to understand the voluntary nature of the church and the Christian mission." It demonstrates the importance of Christian voluntary work in all the churches of the past three centuries, and develops a practical rationale for its effective use in our day. In the course of discussion, such enterprises as missionary societies, Bible societies, theological seminaries, humanitarian Christian aid, and temperance work are mentioned as expressions of voluntarism.

Dr. Brackney, Principal of McMaster Divinity College in Hamilton, Ontario, first explores the biblical, theological and historical background of Christian voluntarism, including British antecedents, North American developments, and internal and external patterns of voluntary work. Then he turns to practical issues, showing how religious voluntary organizations function, the similarities and differences between church and parachurch organizations, and the place of voluntary service in the Christian congregation.

This is a rich source of information on the reasons people join a religious association, the major purposes of church and parachurch groups, and the abiding values of Christian voluntary service cheerfully offered in a worthwhile cause.

In our day thoughtful Christians are constantly challenged by the ongoing debate concerning the degree of government responsibility for the well being of our society. With government cutbacks, scarce resources and belt tightening in the church and the community, this is a timely and relevant study. While it is not easy reading, it offers a balanced, sophisticated treatment of the issues which will be helpful to all pastors and lay people who seek to exercise responsible leadership in the cause of Christ today.

Dr. Allison A. Trites, Payzant Distinguished Professor of Biblical Studies at Acadia Divinity College, Wolfville, Nova Scotia is Acting Assistant Principal, Acadia Divinity College.

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 Editors.

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:

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

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Deadline for Article Submission for Winter Issue: November 1, 1998

# Educating For Life - Some Reflections

Carol Anne Janzen



As students of all ages flood back to school, concerns for our educational systems again preoccupy many minds. As a Christian educator committed to "education for life," to use Thomas Groome's theme phrase, I believe that Christian religious education should assume similar priority in the minds and hearts of believers.

To provide a simple framework for these brief reflections on the contemporary context of Christian education, I propose to use the classic journalistic approach -- the 5 W's.

Rev. Carol Anne Janzen

Let me begin with **WHO**. Who are the learners, the teachers? It may be a cliché to say that we all should be life-long learners, but it is disturbing that, in my experience in the church, so many teachers/leaders in our educational programs are not engaged in any studies/training for themselves. Do we still believe that religious training is unnecessary for teaching the fundamentals of the faith to others, especially to children, when current studies consistently affirm how crucial are the first five to seven years of life in establishing intellectual, psychosocial, emotional and moral development for life? As to who the teachers should be, Paul reminds us that teaching is one of the spiritual gifts. I believe that our churches, and the Kingdom, would be better served if we paid more attention to helping members discern their gifts. Not everyone who loves children (or youth, or adults), is called to be a teacher; James warns us that "we who teach will be judged with greater strictness." [Jas. 3: 1]

As to the **WHERE** of Christian education, both home and church must remain the primary avenues of training. The sad reality of our contemporary life, however, is that neither home nor church is the prime location for interaction. This makes it all the more urgent, then, to equip and support parents and church educators in making creative use of limited time with learners, in combating the increasingly pervasive influence of secularism.

**WHAT** we are to teach is "the whole gospel;" how this translates into the classroom and home life is our challenge. For me, this means an orthodox, trinitarian approach to the Christian faith based on the Biblical record; it includes a balance of doctrine, ethics, faith heritage, communal church life and personal spiritual development. Rigorous thought and earnest prayer need to be our companions as we engage "the good treasure" found in holy scripture, seeking to understand the original context and interpreting and applying it with integrity to our contemporary life.

To ask **WHY** of Christian education may seem superfluous. And yet, I believe it is instructive for us to examine our motives for such an undertaking. With Dr. Alan Sell, I would suggest that our motive should be one of gratitude -- hearts that are over-flowing with gratitude for all that God in Christ has done for us will surely be moved to communicate the fullness of that faith to others. We would not wish to take lightly, Christ's parting command to teach "everything that I have commanded you." [Matt.28:20] Paul speaks to us as he did to Timothy, "Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us." [2 Tim. 1:13-14]

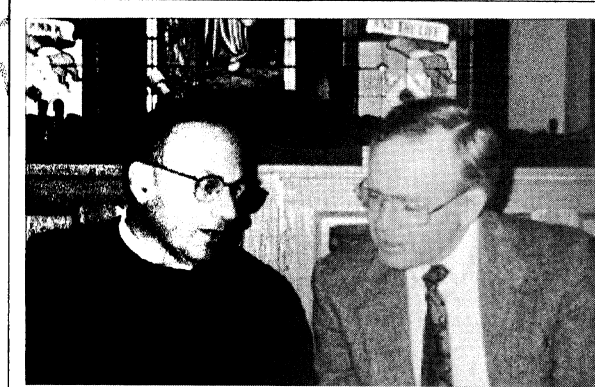
**WHEN** do we undertake this divine mission entrusted to us? Borrowing the slogan from our Convention's current goals, I would urge, "**NOW is the Time!**"

The Rev. Carol Anne Janzen, is the Associate Minister of Children and Families, First Baptist Church, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

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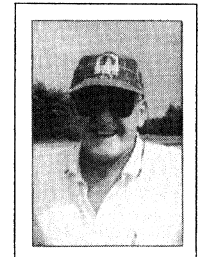
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The Rev. Dr. Roger Cann, is now the Secretary for Friends of the ABF. Requests for membership, along with other information of concern to Members, may be directed to him at: P.O. Box 354, Wolfville, N.S., B0P 1X0.



Former Youth Workers with the AUBC during the 60's attended the 75th Anniversary of Church Camping at Camp Wegesegum, August 14-16.  
(l-r) Rev. Byron Fenwick, Laura Hoar, Shirley E. Ross.



Rev. Robert Jones has retired after a chaplaincy career in the Canadian Forces and as Minister of several United Churches in New Brunswick. "Bobby" will still be active in interim work in Churches. He and Johanne live in Oromocto, New Brunswick.

Rev. Robert Jones