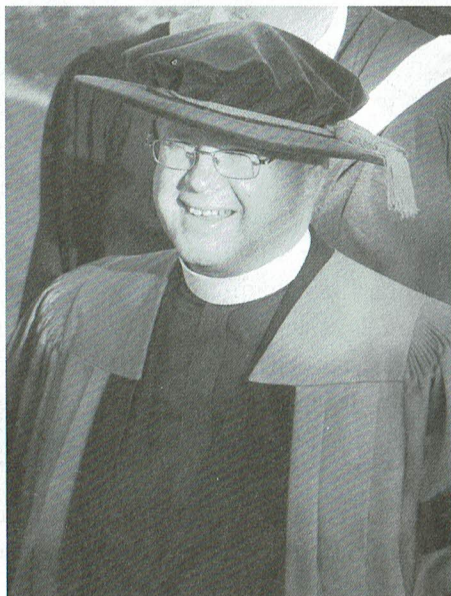


## Tributes

Throughout his career as a Baptist minister, THE REVEREND DOCTOR ROGER PRENTICE has conducted worship in a thoughtful, particular manner, one might even say “decently and in order.” He is shown here at the Fall Convocation of Acadia University shortly before receiving a doctorate following 22 years of service to that community. A review of his recent book, *Hymns At Heaven’s Gate: The Use & Abuse of Hymns*, is found on page 16.



With the death of THE REVEREND JAMES MELVILLE SCOTT on February 15th, the Atlantic Baptist Fellowship lost one of its earliest and most faithful members. Mel was there at the creation when the need for an alternate voice within Convention was most apparent and he continued to support the Fellowship with his attendance when his health permitted. A native of Sydney Mines, Mel came to the Acadia Divinity College following wartime service with the RCAF. From his time at Acadia, he was well-known for his singing with the Acadia University Male Quartet and as a soloist on *Worship in Song* at Radio CKEN in Kentville, Nova Scotia. It was always a pleasure to sing with Mel in a worship service. Mel’s understanding, gained both from his service as Director of Pastoral Care at Northwood Incorporated in Halifax and as a member of the Nova Scotia Senior Citizens’ Commission, made him a trusted voice in Fellowship discussions on the needs of senior citizens.

# The Bulletin

An Atlantic Baptist Fellowship Publication



The African Baptist Association’s Zion church in Truro proudly showcases Bruce Wood’s statue of a church daughter – the late Portia White, renowned contralto. More about the African Association – page 9

### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Taming the Energy Hogs – page 4

Facing mental illness – page 11

The Use and Abuse of Hymns – page 16

Winter 2009

## From the Editor

Something about numbers ending in zeros implies significance, so no doubt the 400-year history of Baptists and even the half-as-long history in this part of the world as a recognized Baptist entity will be cause for celebration. With this issue, we begin a rapid overview by John Boyd of the several kinds of Baptists who united to form what our new executive minister has described as this “diverse” group of churches that constitute the CABC. In the case of Baptists, all of whom claim the right to interpret the faith for themselves, diversity is inevitable. Judging from the assemblies, the bookstore display, and the seminars, *Oasis*, the Convention assembly, seems to represent only the churches that have traditional, perhaps Victorian, thinking about the faith, and a modern, at times disturbing, worship style. Coming from a church with the reverse of these characteristics, I hope that there really is room for the diversity that has existed for more than 200 years.

— ED COLQUHOUN

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## A Word from the President

DAVE OGILVIE

At a recent meeting of our ABF Executive, it was noted that 2009 marks the 400th Anniversary of Baptists. A small group of English “dissenters” living in Amsterdam had been meeting for worship, and sometime in early 1609 the group held its first baptismal service. John Smyth, the leader of the group, first baptized himself and then proceeded to baptize the other adult believers upon their profession of faith in Christ. It’s a great story, and a wonderful heritage we share. However, at our meeting, the question was asked, “So what?” Here we are 400 years later, in a time when many of the freedoms yearned and fought for by those early Baptists are now firmly established. Here we are 400 years later, in an age when old denominational lines are increasingly transected by new lines that define and divide the church. Here we are 400 years later, in an age when our family name – *Baptist* – is worn by an increasingly diverse spectrum of churches, and when it is being shed by some who feel it no longer names them appropriately, or perhaps fails to ‘brand’ them competitively. Here we are at the end of 400 years of Baptist history, and so what?

It’s a good and fair question. Now it may have been asked partly as an expression of cynicism by one of our members who was growing weary of our meeting and anxious for lunch. It may have been expressive of that creeping despair many of us feel when we look around at the sorry state of our larger Baptist life and the lack of interest in “things Baptist” on the part of many of our worshipping kin. But it was still a good and fair question, and it prompted some lively and meaningful discussion that seasoned and seeded our plans for our Fall Assembly in Amherst. Stay tuned for more details!

As I drove home from that meeting, I found myself replaying



our discussion in my mind, picturing the faces of the ten others with me around the table. And a profound sense of gratitude swept over me. I'm deeply grateful for those others, and for you who will take the time to read my words and the articles in this issue of *The Bulletin*. I'm deeply grateful for the sense of kinship and history we share. I'm deeply grateful for the freedom and encouragement we offer one another to ask good and fair questions, and to passionately discuss potential answers. And I'm deeply grateful that even after 400 years of Baptist influence and in an age such as this, *you care* – enough to commit and contribute to the work of ABF, enough to come to our luncheons and gatherings, enough to continue fostering our shared values of freedom, inquiry, equity, and ecumenism. I'm deeply grateful for you.

Thank you! And Happy Birthday!

## *Living with Respect and Hope in God's Creation*

### ABF FALL ASSEMBLY

What if the Church ignores the most pressing ethical problem of our time – climate change? On October 3 and 4, the ABF Fall Assembly, meeting at Germain Street United Baptist Church, explored a number of assumptions implicit in the above question. Led by Eric Tusz-King of Sackville, New Brunswick, they assumed that climate change was a problem that could adversely affect many people, that human actions related to the use of energy accelerate climate change, and that Christians and their churches have a role in modeling responsible energy use.

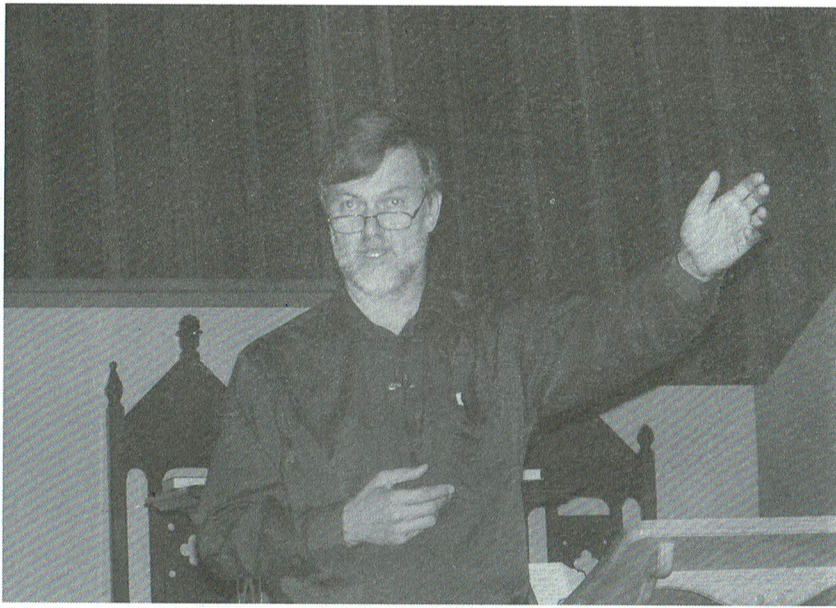
In discussion periods, the assembly voiced several controversial viewpoints; e.g., that economic recession may be the solution to the tendency to waste; that people pollute because they can; and that electric cars may have their own ecological challenges.



*Some of the attendees at the ABF fall gathering in Saint John*



*Eric Tusz-King and the Rev. Jud Corey listen intently to a point being made by Bob Spinks over coffee*



Eric Tusz-King

There was a lively exchange of views. Ultimately, the participants appreciated and shared Tusz-King's hope for "a new relationship with creation, [one] not rewarding the consumption of resources."

Tusz-King, by means of a variety of approaches, helped the assembly see that society's newfound respect for nature made it difficult to accept the "energy hogs" of buildings that churches now proudly display to the world. Although people commonly speak of a personal carbon footprint, the idea that church buildings have a carbon footprint, the reduction of which might do much more than save money, was a fresh idea to some of the group assembled in Saint John. What then is to be done, as Tusz-King urged "to communicate and exemplify a message of hope?"

The assembly discussed how informed lay persons could offer leadership both in energy savings and in community activism. They examined print and video resources that are available from government departments and denominational offices. The final suggestion was a five-point plan for Church action:

1. Educate about the need for change;
2. Act on reducing the energy use of the building;
3. Nurture a spirit of hope in God's creation;
4. Participate in community efforts; and
5. Urge our fellow churches to participate in government policy and programs.

A very welcome guest to the program and business meeting was Bob Spinks, Network/Development Coordinator of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America. The business meeting heard more about the Global Baptist Peace Conference to be held on February 9 to 14, 2009, in Rome, Italy.

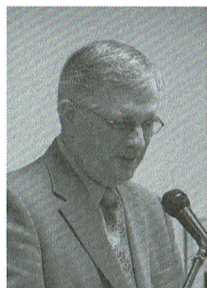
### *Upcoming Conference*

The Atlantic Baptist Fellowship Fall Assembly is scheduled for September 25 and 26 at the First Baptist Church, Amherst, Nova Scotia, which is celebrating 200 years of witness in the community. Speaker for this celebration and also to recognize 400 years of Baptist history will be Dr. Peter Paris, distinguished professor at Princeton Theological Seminary for many years and presently teaching a course at Harvard. Dr. Paris, a native of New Glasgow who graduated from Acadia University, has friends and family in Nova Scotia. Also providing leadership with him will be several seminar leaders who will illuminate various aspects of our history.

On the Friday evening, there will be a dessert theatre directed by the talented Reverend Donald Miller who, with the help of the local congregation and some guest artists, will serve up Baptist history with a dash of humour.

Details about this conference, including places to stay in Amherst, will be in the next *Bulletin*.

## *Some Thoughts on the History of Atlantic Baptists*



EDITOR'S NOTE: *On April 26, 2008, the Rev. John Boyd shared these thoughts with the Halifax Region United Baptist Association, which was considering the proposed Convention incorporation document. Drawing on works by I.E. Bill and George Levy, Mr. Boyd's brief overview helps put in perspective the place of Atlantic Baptists in our 400-year Baptist common history.*

### — Regular Baptists —

**LATTER HALF OF 18TH CENTURY** The arrival of the New England Planters brought Baptist and Congregational Christians to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, especially to the Annapolis Valley. Numbers increased greatly during the "New Light" Revival of Henry Alline in the 1770s. This led to the formation of several congregations of mixed Congregational and Baptist members. Alline himself was not particularly interested in Baptism and Communion, being much more interested in seeing people come to the light of the Gospel and give their lives to Christ.

**EARLY 19TH CENTURY** In the first decade of the 19th Century, leaders of the New Light Churches met to provide mutual support, counsel and encouragement. This led to the founding of an Association, at first named the Baptist and Congregational Association. In forming this Association the Churches also declared: that such Association is entirely consistent with the independence and power of particular churches, because it pretends to no other powers than those of an advisory council, utterly disclaiming all

superiority, jurisdiction, coercive right, or infallibility. (Levy, p. 72)

By 1810, the word Congregational had been dropped and the Association became known as the Nova Scotia Baptist Association. It had accepted a Close Communion policy that required member Churches to admit only immersed believers to Communion. This led to the purging of non-immersed people from the rolls of formerly mixed membership Churches. In the early years New Brunswick and PEI congregations also sent delegates to the meetings. A separate New Brunswick Baptist Association was eventually formed.

These Baptist Churches and Associations were "Regular Baptists" with a basically Calvinist theology. During the next 35 years, they established Home and Foreign Missions, Sunday Schools and educational institutions, most prominently Acadia, by the N. S. Baptist Association.

**1846 – FOUNDING OF REGULAR BAPTIST CONVENTION** In 1846 the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association formed the Baptist Convention of NS, NB and PEI, eventually known as the Baptist Convention of the Maritime Provinces. The Associations also maintained their existence, although they were divided into smaller geographical areas. The main purpose was to better coordinate the growing work of Baptists and to increase support of common institutions.

Note: Both Associations and the Convention were formed from the "bottom up" as grass-roots led organizations to provide mutual support and counsel and to enhance effective ministry through cooperation. Tremendous effort was spent in building consensus and common purpose and to respect the independence, or autonomy of congregations.

### — African Baptist Association —

A second "stream" flowing into our denominational life is that of the black Baptist Churches who have been members of the African

(United ) Baptist Association since its founding in 1854. The story of these Churches is largely unknown and the work of Convention's Racism Working Group is only beginning to uncover aspects of this story and its significance to the rest of us.

In the 1780s, Rev. David George, a black slave who escaped to Nova Scotia, arrived in Shelburne and established a Baptist congregation. Many would rate George as an equal to Henry Alline in terms of the influence of his preaching and the number of congregations he established in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Eventually he led many of the black community to Sierra Leone in the hopes of establishing a free community there.

The first Baptist Church established in Halifax in the 1790s was racially mixed and largely black under the leadership of a white Englishman, John Burton. He was a close friend and colleague of the Baptist leaders in the Valley who formed the Nova Scotia Baptist Association and early records show that his church was involved in Association life. Thirty years later the disaffected Anglicans from St. Paul's who eventually formed the Granville St. Baptist Church (now First Baptist Church) in 1827, looked to Burton and his congregation for assistance and help. The racism and class-ism of the day led to most whites leaving Burton's Church and by 1832 it had reformed as Cornwallis St. Baptist and Emmanuel Baptist in Hammonds Plains.

The arrival of former slave Richard Preston in 1816, who was baptized by Burton, marked the beginning of another period of growth. According to AUBA history, Preston had to go to England to be ordained – "white" history does not record the reason or any discussion of what may have been happening. Preston became the first Pastor of Cornwallis St. and was instrumental in planting many churches.

In 1854 the African Baptist Association was formed, not as an Association of a larger Baptist denomination, but as a denomination in its own right. Since this is after the founding of the Regular Baptist Convention of NS, NB and PEI, one assumes that there were a number of reasons why these black churches did not participate in the formation of the Convention. Studies are beginning to make

clear that race and paternalism played their part. In particular, black churches wanted the freedom to worship and to organize their church life in their own way.

It was in 1883 that the ABA joined the Baptist Convention of the Maritime Provinces. Histories written from the white perspective emphasized that the ABA became an Association like all the others that made up Convention. The ABA, renamed AUBA after the 1905-06 formation of the United Baptist Convention, has maintained its identity as the most influential and important black organization in Atlantic Canada, and has functioned more as a denomination than as an Association. Some of this story is just now being realized.

*In Part II of his brief review of our history upcoming in the spring edition of this Bulletin, Mr. Boyd will reflect on the Free/Free-will/Free Christian Baptists and our Union of 1905-06, with some concluding observations.*

## *Families Caring for Those Recovering from Mental Illness*

ROGER CANN

In the summer of 1956 Charlie Taylor took our class in clinical training to the institution in Waterville housing the mentally ill. I was quickly beaten in checkers by a patient who was the champ. We showed slides depicting scenes from the life of Jesus. The picture of Jesus with the children prompted one patient to shout out "Jerusalem". I wasn't looking for that response, but there had been a connection. That was my introduction to the world of mental illness. The lesson I started to learn that day was: they are



Roger and Sadie Cann, with their son Paul, who has schizophrenia.

people. Yes, sick people, but surely children of God, and they are to be treated as such.

Fast forward to the days when our son was being assessed at the Clark Institute of Psychiatry in Toronto. The preferred language had changed. Not “patients”, as the term is too depersonalizing. You say “consumers of mental health services”, or “those living with mental illness”. I still find myself stumbling over that.

The psychiatrist gave us an early assurance. “Nothing you have done,

or nothing you have failed to do has caused your son to be mentally ill. It’s a disease of the brain which affects one in a hundred. Schizophrenia.” We set out to learn as much as we could about the disease; we read books, attended conferences, and were faithful at support group sessions. We also attended group therapy once a month with other parents.

We discovered the usual pattern was to assign fault: one parent accusing the other of being too harsh or too easy going. The strain on a marriage and on all members of a family was intense. We found ourselves acting as resources for other families. Hey, it’s a disease. If it were diabetes you’d watch your diet and your life style and take your medication. So also with schizophrenia – diet, life style, and medication. It’s a disease. It’s treatable.

The Baptist Women of Ontario and Quebec invited Sadie to conduct a workshop on schizophrenia at their annual meeting. Some present wanted to see it as God’s punishment. They hadn’t spent much time with Job or heard Christ’s word on the sick person at the Pool of Bethesda. Sadie was able to affirm that the key for the Church is to open up channels of communication, welcoming those who are living with mental illness, and providing support to their families.

Families could serve as partners to health professionals in the

care and treatment of those who are mentally ill. That is because they are in frequent, if not daily, contact with the person who is ill:

- Most consumers of mental health services live in social contexts where relationships are important. To understand the consumer’s situation, contact with the family is important.
- Families have valuable information about what is effective for their relative.
- Families have a wide range of skills and knowledge that could be an important resource in the development of services to meet the needs of their immediate community or area.

In summary; families have insights which the health professionals should not ignore. They are part of the social context of the consumer of mental health services. If for no other reason, families can save dollars in the health care service through the provision of care.

Families need care themselves. There are practical impacts in caring for a loved one who is mentally ill: housing, finances, employment, and social activities. The emotional impacts include stress, grief, and loss and these affect the mental health of family members. The caregivers need care. Studies on the stress that family caregiving produces have been around for the past 50 years. Surveys such as conducted by Genuine Progress Index in Nova Scotia support the proposition that caring for a member of the family with mental illness takes its toll on the caring family.

The language used to describe treatment of the mentally ill has changed. My first contact was in the era of “lock ‘em up”. There was a strong stigma attached and most families wouldn’t mention the sick person. Some of that stigma still exists. Next the treatment was described as “coping”. Next we had “living with mental illness”. Now advocates for consumers and their families talk about “recovery”. Yes, it’s a disease and it’s not curable, but it is treatable,

especially if the health professionals work in partnership with the supportive family members.

The nature of that partnership (families and health professionals) needs sensitivity. It can't be the Lone Ranger high up on Silver, talking down to Tonto, "Tonto, I want you to know I value our sacred partnership as two brothers venturing forth equally into the mythic wilderness." In our health care system there are power imbalances. You can't be sick unless the physician gives you permission and says so. And you are asking for a "turn down" if you suggest a diagnosis.

Once the family has established a relationship with the health professionals, it needs to progress beyond the pat on the head to an active partnership in recovery-focused treatment and supports. What is the medication? What are the side effects? Are there attendant mood disorders, or fixations, or addictions? What can we do about those?

I like the suggestion published in the *Globe & Mail* this June:

Set up advisory groups to represent affected families in every district:

Mental-health problems do not just affect individuals. They devastate entire families. These families, from all walks of life, are brutally thrust into the health, justice and social-welfare systems. There are inordinate demands made on these families and virtually no support. They need advocates and they need navigators.

Every health region should have a mental-health family-advisory committee to tap into the hard-earned expertise of those who have been there. These cannot be token positions: they need to have real power to shape the mental-health system.

The reality is that most care is delivered by family caregivers. Every patient experiencing a first psychotic episode should be assigned a navigator to ensure rapid, aggressive treatment and support and to ensure family

members are not kept in the dark – which they too often are.

*Roger Cann is a member of the Rapha Initiative Working Group, which, in and through the members of the Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches, promotes awareness of mental health issues and seeks to reduce the stigma of mental illness.*

## Church Notes

Visitation and Outreach assumed a higher profile in the WINDSOR BAPTIST CHURCH recently with the appointment of the Rev. Marlene Knowles, Moderator of the Halifax Association, to this part-time ministry. She joins the Rev. Jeff White in leadership of this church, which sponsor a weekly luncheon that is attended by a diverse group representation of various faiths and social standing. Like many churches whose building is a challenging legacy, the congregation, through the trustees, continues to study how their building is used.



The WOLFVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH proclaims on its welcome brochure that "There's more to church than an hour on Sunday morning!" One of the biggest church projects living out this proclamation is their accommodation of

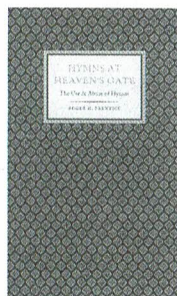




the Wolfville and Area Food Bank for the Inter-Church Council, serving more than 70 families. At Christmas, Nancy Denton's *The Absolutely Nothing Can Go Wrong Christmas Pageant* brought the joy of music to the congregation. A number of new initiatives have begun as a result of a congregational survey and small group meetings considering the church's mission and use of its building. (Is it something in the Valley air?)

## Reviews

Roger H. Prentice, *Hymns At Heaven's Gate: The Use & Abuse of Hymns* (Roger H. Prentice, 2008, 180 pages)



"Worshipping is work, hard work, and the congregation needs to be prepared for this. God deserves nothing less."

Dr. Prentice's self-described "essay," *Hymns At Heaven's Gate: The Use & Abuse of Hymns*, is much more than the title may suggest. While the music of the church is at the core of Dr. Prentice's writing, in short order readers discover they are being asked, on occasion quite personally and directly, to take a serious and much closer look at what it is we call worship. As Dr. Prentice writes, "... worship is the prime call of God upon His people. It is not a choice for the believer, a frivolous activity, and it is not for our personal benefit. All of our worship must be an act of sacrifice..." This may seem an obvious thing to most of us; however, a little scratching at the surface of Sunday morning comfort zones will likely reveal we are not so close as we may think. Although many of the references throughout the essay reach back at least half a century or more, the prime directive, a return to informed and intentional God-centred worship and a steering away from me- or I-centric worship, is completely in line with the thoughts of such an acclaimed contemporary author

and theologian as Marva J. Dawn (*Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down* and *A Royal "Waste" of Time*).

Throughout the essay, along with discussions of the numerous aspects of the work or liturgy of worship, each chapter deals directly with hymns and hymn tunes. Dr. Prentice attacks the abuses of hymns often perpetrated by organists, as well as the abuses by those clergy that thoughtlessly insert hymns with no regard for textual appropriateness or liturgical function. No punches are pulled! Strong words are likely to cause an immediate negative response from many readers. However, they should collect themselves and persevere to the crux of the matter. One might wish for a slightly more sugarcoated approach, but as Dr. Prentice puts it, "It is written with an urgency that emerges from my belief that something very important is happening within our worship services. The turn of direction in worship from the Divine to the human ..."

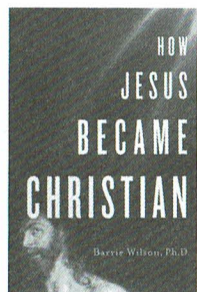
Those churches, and clergy and musicians therein, that would count themselves as *traditional*, with hymnbooks full of *traditional* hymns and hymn tunes need not look much further than *Hymns At Heaven's Gate* for a sound introduction to not only the practical application of hymns in worship, but also a brief history of the hymnody of the Church. From the canticles and their uses, to the music of Iona and Taizé, Dr. Prentice offers a broad, and by times surprising, discourse on music for worship. This is not accomplished, however, without treading down a few dangerous paths. For example, Dr. Prentice tackles the discussion of "good and bad music" in the context of worship services. This is not a new discussion, nor is it likely to ever cease; however, such a subjective topic as this, whether supported by quotes from John Wesley and Walford Davies or not, will undoubtedly open a can of worms large enough to obscure the real point of the discussion. One need only read the introduction to recognize that Dr. Prentice reveals on occasion what may be seen as personal preferences – preferences based on many years in parish ministry followed by nearly twenty-five years as a University Chaplain responsible for eleven services weekly.

Dr. Prentice has accomplished a grand task in this essay; that being, should readers find upset in anything, they should be prepared to undertake a close examination of exactly why.

*John M. Scott, University and Chapel Organist at Acadia University as well as Director of Music at St. James Anglican Church in Kentville. A Colleague of the Royal Canadian College of Organists, he is also Director of the South Shore Chorale.*



Barrie Wilson, *How Jesus Became Christian* (Random House Canada, 2008, 317 pages).



Rabbi Jesus, as Bruce Chilton would name him, was a Jew. Since the New Testament begins as follows, “the account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham,” no one should be surprised. It is obvious that the *Gospel According to Matthew* stresses Jesus’ place in the long line of Jewish heroes of faith, e.g., the Sermon on the Mount portrays him as a new Moses. The contentious point of the book *How Jesus Became Christian* is Barrie Wilson’s understanding of the meaning of Jesus coming not to “abolish” but to “fulfil the law”. Christians traditionally argue that Jesus transcended the Torah and holiness codes – on the one hand pointing out that lustful thoughts were as harmful as adultery and on the other that one could harvest grain to eat on the Sabbath, since “the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.” Using the first gospel as his main source, York University’s Wilson argues that Jesus was a fully observant Jew for whom righteousness consisted in the practice of the law in all its minutia. In this, Wilson is sympathetic to the Jewish Christian Ebionite faction, which lasted for several hundred years. The church, according to Wilson, has surprisingly adopted the viewpoint of the heretic Marcion who, prior to the establishment

of the Christian canon, excised both the Hebrew scriptures and anything not written by Paul or Luke from the Christian scriptures, thereby emphasizing the non-Jewish element of the new religion. Jesus has become a Christian.

The book of Acts, which attempts to harmonize the statements of Paul with a description of the Jerusalem community of Jewish followers of the Way, is viewed by Wilson as a complete fabrication or cover-up of the fact that Jesus was a practicing Jew who preached observance of the Jewish law. For the most part, Wilson’s is a fair and balanced presentation, telling his reader whenever he moves outside the scholarly consensus to a rather “out-there” thesis. When he writes of the Apostle Paul, however, he appears to have a blind spot; in fact, the animus is palpable. Writing from his Jewish viewpoint, Wilson goes beyond arguing that Paul betrayed his Jewish background; he questions how Jewish Paul was. “Did he come from a Torah-observant home? As an adult, did he follow the law?” (p. 108), and so on. Wilson seems to doubt that we have any reliable information about Paul’s background. He concentrates on the Book of Galatians as he attempts to show how Paul’s attitudes exemplify both unfair criticisms of the Jewish faith and an anti-Semitic Christianity.

What is the value of Barrie Wilson’s book in the eyes of this reader? Firstly, it very clearly establishes its understanding, albeit a re-writing, of Christian history: orthodox readers will not agree with his thesis; however, few writers have explained better the societal matrix from which Christianity emerged. Secondly, Wilson shows the harmful anti-Semitism that has existed from the early days when what Bart Ehrman calls proto-orthodox believers were competing with Jewish Christians. Finally, there is the very sympathetic portrayal of the rabbi Jesus: even from Wilson’s viewpoint, it is easy to understand why millions continue to follow Jesus.

*Ed Colquhoun (Biblical citations from the NRSV)*

# The House of the Church: A Theology Applied

BY DR. CAROL ANNE JANZEN

Vincent Rushton Memorial Lecture  
and the Annual ABF Luncheon

Manning Memorial Chapel, Acadia University  
Noon, Saturday June 6

*Reserve a place at the luncheon by contacting  
the Rev. Keith Churchill at [kjchurchill@gmail.com](mailto:kjchurchill@gmail.com).*



*Dr. Carol Anne Janzen, Assistant Professor of Practical Theology,  
Assistant to the Director of the Doctor of Ministry Program and Dean  
of Students (interim) at Acadia Divinity College. Dr Janzen's areas of  
interest are children's spiritual formation, peace and justice education,  
faith and culture, sacred place and space, and church history.*

## *Invitation to the 2009 Alliance of Baptists Convocation*

As a skilled artisan, a weaver gathers threads of varied hues and textures, weaving them into a beautiful pattern. As the weaver gathers materials, the final work of art can only be seen in the dreams and creativity of the weaver. Only as the threads are woven together does the weaver's vision become a tangible creation, a work of beauty. As a masterful weaver, the Spirit works among varied people, weaving them into God's dream. So has gone the story of the Alliance of Baptists. For over twenty years the people of the Alliance of Baptists have gathered together to celebrate the work of the Spirit within and through us individually and collectively.

Join us April 17-19, 2009 for the annual Convocation of the Alliance of Baptists at Park Road Baptist Church in Charlotte, NC as we explore what it means to be "Weaving with the Spirit." Beginning with creative worship on Friday night, Convocation attendees will celebrate the movement of the Spirit in the past as we look toward the Spirit's continued weaving.

Saturday morning, attendees will hear about ways the Alliance is weaving with the Spirit into the future as we explore the Alliance's new initiatives. Attendees will have a chance to give their input on these initiatives and explore ways to spread the news of the Alliance's good work with local congregations. During a banquet Saturday evening, we will celebrate the invaluable work of Stan Hastey who has served on the Alliance staff for more than 21 years. Sunday, the Convocation will conclude with community worship, with Diana Butler Bass as the proclaimer.

Join us for this exciting event as we weave our stories, our pasts, presents, and our futures together!

*Ken Meyers, Katherine Amos, Paula Dempsey, Anne Hunter Eidson,  
David Jordan, Zach Roberts, Maria Stinnett – 2009 Convocation  
Task Group*



*The ABF executive at work*

FRIENDS OF THE ATLANTIC BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP

Friends are sympathetic to the aims of the ABF,  
and support its work by an annual subscription fee of \$10.

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DATE \_\_\_\_\_ TEL \_\_\_\_\_ SUBSCRIPTION \_\_\_\_\_

## *What is the Atlantic Baptist Fellowship?*

The Atlantic Baptist Fellowship was formed in the early 1970s by a group of Baptist laity and clergy who conceived it as a way of pursuing certain converging interests. First, they wanted to witness to historical Baptist principles. They also wanted to be involved with non-Baptist communions in joint worship, social action and ecumenical discussions of the nature of the Church. Finally, they wished to create a safe and welcoming environment where Baptists can share concerns and points of view without fear of being marginalized. The ABF is not an executive body, carrying out programs and advocating positions. It is a consultative body with the following aims:

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 Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches 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.

In pursuit of these aims, the ABF publishes the Bulletin and meets semiannually for worship, fellowship, and study of an issue of contemporary interest. Everyone is welcome to attend.

For current information, consult the website at  
*[www.atlanticbaptistfellowship.org](http://www.atlanticbaptistfellowship.org)*