

The Bulletin

A PUBLICATION OF THE
CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR BAPTIST FREEDOMS
FORMERLY THE ATLANTIC BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP



BURLINGTON BAPTIST CHURCH

FALL 2017

Editorial: A Man of Faith

Dr. Rodger Forsman

We have lost a man of great faith, articulated thought and compelling presence. Dr. Rodger Forsman passed away in the Valley Regional Hospital, Kentville, NS, on Sunday, 13 August, after a short illness. Dr. Forsman was a former choir member, deacon and Chair of the Board of Trustees of Wolfville Baptist Church, Professor of Philosophy, Head of Religious Studies and Acting Dean of Arts, at Acadia University. Especially important to us, he was stalwart member of the Atlantic Baptist Fellowship from its beginning and its continuation later as the Canadian Association for Baptist Freedoms.



For *The Bulletin*, Dr. Forsman was once our productive and astute Editor. He presented a publication filled with news and views of the organization and thoughtful discussion. He became, thus, a pillar of our organization. We cannot take his editorship lightly for he crafted avenues for ideas to be considered and strongly supported the historic Baptist Freedoms and Principals, not the least Soul Liberty.

Dr. Forsman leaves us his wife of 61 years, Lois, and two sons, Jon (Dominique) and Andrew (Hooban) and three grandchildren. We join with their many family and friends in expressing our deepest sympathy and care and pray that they will be comforted by the love of God that surpasses all human understanding.

The passing of Dr. Forsman might remind us to mark carefully those who have been original companions of CABF and their mighty contribution to our work over our 46 years with Baptist churches.

Roger H. Prentice—Editor

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

Editor is Roger Prentice—5 Grandview Drive, Wolfville, Nova Scotia B4P 1W5.
The colour cover was donated by a friend of CABF.

The Little Kitty-corner Church:

THE STORY OF BURLINGTON BAPTIST CHURCH

The Rev'd Bert Radford



A Baptist Church was founded in Burlington one and one-half centuries ago. It was called Calvary Baptist Church and it met in a small, ornate, brick building which stands, to this day, at the corner of Ontario and Locust Streets. The building was set at an angle to the street, as if to say, "We do not align ourselves with the norm, the common, the accepted stance of the church. We are Baptists; we are different."

The little circle of faith on Locust Street thrived until the year 1927 when the Baptists of Ontario split apart, in a violent rupture. Too many people were too right! The little church angled to the street became a house divided against itself. The circle was broken and the church left its founding community, The Baptist Convention.

But the women would not divide. They re-made a circle, clung together and shared the Convention's mission to the world. They called themselves a Baptist Mission Circle and, in 1952, these women shared their vision with a wider group. Within a few months they formed Burlington Baptist Church, a chartered Baptist Convention Church in the town of Burlington. The community grew; people came. They came from many different places. Many came from the harbours and ports, cities and towns of the Atlantic Provinces, from Wolfville, Peggy's Cove, Sydney, Fredericton and Riverside.

In 1970, two decades after its birth, the maturing church opened its membership to all people of faith regardless of the mode of their baptism or the church they were coming from. The circle opened; old barriers of creed and ritual were crossed. There was one body, and many, many members.

Barriers remained. Only men could lead. Only men could be deacons and make the important decisions. Only men could be ministers. All

were welcome to the sacred table but only men could serve. Even those women who had kept the flame alive all those years, even they could not lead in the church. They could not serve communion, but they could serve church dinners.

But the little circle of faith had heard the call and caught a glimpse of the vision of a church in which there was “neither male nor female” and here in this small corner of Burlington, the barriers began to fall. In the second decade of the church’s life, Edith Mitchell became the first woman to chair the Board of Managers and the first woman to be a Deacon. In 1989 Burlington Baptist Church, for the first time, called a woman minister. The Rev. Heather Gilmour served with distinction for 12 years.

There were those who still lived in the shadows who were not universally welcome in all circles, who looked different, who thought differently, who loved differently. And the little church that began kitty-corner to convention continued to follow their vision and, in 2016 voted to support their minister in presiding at gay and lesbian weddings in the name of the church and in the sanctuary.

Gay and lesbian people, created and loved by God, bisexual and transgender people, struggling in a world that does not understand, are accepted in the little kitty-corner church.

Now people feel orphaned, only too aware that they stand at a tangent to the circle that should be enclosing them, the Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec. No matter how resolute and strong a church, it needs other communities to reach out in reciprocal acceptance. In past years they have found the larger unity of faith in the Gathering, the Ontario meeting ground for like-minded, Baptist churches, and now, as well, in the Canadian Association for Baptist Freedoms. On June 3, 2017, Burlington Baptist Church was accepted into membership in the Association.

Their vision is ever before them; it calls them to be *an increasingly welcoming, inclusive, and nurturing Christian community of faith* (From the Vision Statement: Burlington Baptist Church). They continue to stand kitty-corner to conventions but firm in their convictions, they are one in Christ.

The Rev'd Bert Radford lives with his wife Mae and are members of the Burlington Baptist Church, Ontario.

CABF and The Gathering of Baptists Meet Together

by Fred Demaray

At the invitation of the Gathering, a joint meeting of both groups was held in Ottawa at First Baptist Church, April 28 & 29. This was the first such joint meeting. The hope in suggesting this was that we could get to know one another better. About 50 people gathered for our sessions almost evenly divided between the two groups.



The event began with an evening meal. The food was provided by the Rangoon Restaurant, owned and operated by members of the Chin Baptist Church, refugees from Burma. In addition, the meal was topped with dessert, apple or strawberry rhubarb pie. Everyone seemed to enjoy the meal.

The evening session was part of FBC's Ivison Lecture series with the Rev'd John Boyd reflecting on changes in ministry over the period of time of his ministry. Peppered with good humour, it was a very interesting and challenging talk. It certainly is not the same, is it? For those who wished a social time was planned at the Lord Elgin Hotel following the lecture.

On Saturday we gathered for a second session with the Rev'd Neil Hunter presenting thoughts on how the art of communication has changed from Gutenberg to Zuckerberg. Each change in the method of communication has brought changes in how we communicate the gospel. This was also a challenge to think about the direction of the church in the future and how we share the gospel in a technological age.

After a delicious lunch, prepared by Jesse Smith of FBC, Calvin Eady, vice moderator of the Gathering, helped us explore ways in which we might use internet platforms to enhance our ministries. It was interesting to see how many of us are already very much in tune with current platforms, and how many of us are still ludites. We then moved to a time

of sharing, facilitated by LeeAnn McKenna, in which we explored ways we could support each other and work together on common areas. In the end, each group committed to naming a few people to share as a joint group to explore some of the areas of possibility.

The main purpose of the event was to provide an opportunity to connect with each other. Old friendships were rekindled, new friendships made. Everyone expressed a desire to do this again sometime and felt that it was a helpful exercise. Copies of the talks are being collected and will be available to share from Fred Demaray, at fred.demaray@sympatico.ca.

Fred Demaray is the Moderator of The Gathering of Baptists.

Canadian Council of Churches *New Acting General Secretary*

The Canadian Council of Churches announced on 16 August 2017 that they have appointed a new Acting General Secretary in the person of Peter Noteboom, a member of the Christian Reformed Church in Toronto. The CCC represents 25 church groups in Canada, including the CABF. The Rev'd Dr. Karen Hamilton has been the General Secretary for 15 years.



Edward Colquhoun

Mr. Noteboom has been associated with the CCC since 1999 and in his new rôle hopes to encourage the relationship of denominations within the Council and promote the council's purposes. He is also committed to the social actions of the churches in communities both at home and abroad. He believes councils of churches can be very effective in such ministries. In particular, Mr. Noteboom said in a press release, 'I've always been

passionate about justice, faith and the church.' He later mentioned, 'I'm interested in accompanying us all as we rethink what it means to be a council of churches working together for Christian unity in Canada.'

The CABF joined the CCC mainly under the encouragement of Dr. Daniel Gibson, a highly appreciated former President of the CABF. It is the opinion of our group of churches and individual members that the ecumenical movement can profit from Baptist involvement as well as broaden our understanding of Christian ministry together. It is hoped that the Atlantic Baptist convention will, some day, rejoin the CCC after many years of having stepped aside. Mr. Edward Colquhoun is our delegate to the CCC.

News and Notes

We are pleased to learn that the **Rev'd Dr. Daniel Green** has accepted a call to become the Minister of First Baptist Church, Amherst, NS He will begin his ministry there on Advent Sunday 2017. He has been serving the Chester United Baptist Church for many years.

The **Rev'd Dr. Rusty Edwards** has been called to become the Minister of First Baptist Church Halifax where he will begin his ministry near the end of the summer. He succeeds the Rev'd John Boyd and Interim Minister, the Rev'd Lynn Uzans.

The **Rev'd Barbara Bishop** has been serving the Port Williams United Baptist Church since the resignation of the Rev'd David Ogilvie. The **Rev'd Elizabeth Johnson** has also been serving as Minister of Pastoral Care during this interim.

The **Rev'd Jennifer Smith**, who has been lately serving in Christian Education at the Windsor Baptist Church, has been called to become the Minister of Christian Education and Outreach at the Wolfville Baptist Church. She will begin in September 2017.

Rushton Lecture Rally

The annual Vincent Rushton Lecture, held last 3 June, was an outstanding success, not the least due to the hospitality of the Port Williams United Baptist Church. The hearty welcome, the sumptuous luncheon, the worshipful grace and the heart-felt fellowship brought over 50

people together in the spirit we have known and valued for 46 years.

The session began with worship which reminded us to look beyond ourselves to God in Christ who calls us to minister in our now-fractured world. The lecturer, the Rev'd Lynn Uzans, was ably introduced by Lee Nicholas Pattillo. Lynn, an Anglican minister, was appointed



Port Williams United Baptist Church

the Interim Minister of First Baptist Church Halifax on 1 January 2016 and has been a blessing to their ministry until the calling of a new Minister of the congregation.

The topic of the lecture was 'An Anglican in Baptist Circles,' which proved to be an adept and even humorous account of how a highly trained Anglican member of the clergy found herself serving a Baptist congregation. Indeed, she would find that there were many uniting points that were all brought together in

Lecture Organist: Robert Rushton

Christ. The household of faith can become a reality.

The luncheon is always a highlight of the Rushton Lecture series, and the people of the Port Williams church 'did themselves proud'. A business meeting was conducted by President, the Rev'd John Tonks, which included two important presentations: a life membership to former President, the Rev'd Dr. Daniel Gibson, and the formal acceptance as a congregational member of Burlington Baptist Church.



Rev'd Jeffrey Hosick

Baptist missionary in India, was a most valuable member of our former Atlantic Baptist Fellowship, and for many years acted as a volunteer General Secretary for our organization.

*Presentation of Life Membership:
(l-r) Cathy Gibson, Dr. Dan
Gibson, Rev'd John Tonks*



Lee Nicholas-Pattillo

She becomes an Ontario sister to our other member congregation in that province: First Baptist Church, Brantford.

An important report was given by Edward Colquhoun (First Baptist Church, Amherst, NS) who is the CABF representative to the Canadian Council of Churches. This is an extremely important part of the CABF's work and witness.

The Rev'd Vincent Rushton, a former



Maritime Baptist Chaplains of the Great War

by Zachary Cooper

Distilled from my research this summer under Dr. Carol Anne Janzen, assisted by Patricia Townsend, and resolutely supported by the Rev. Dr. Roger Prentice, here are some short sketches of the seven Maritime Baptist ministers who served overseas as chaplains in the First World War.



John Howard MacDonald (1863–1946) was the first Maritime Baptist minister to receive a chaplaincy appointment. Attached to the 26th Battalion of the 2nd CEF in November 1914, Macdonald had previously served in New Brunswick as a militia chaplain with the 71st York Regiment. After a stretch at the Western Front with the 5th and 6th Field Ambulance units, in early 1916 MacDonald was moved to an administrative position at the Canadian Chaplain Service's London head office. When war broke out, MacDonald had been editor of the *Maritime Baptist* for less than a year. He continued his literary flair overseas by sending regular letters to the paper's readership until his move to London. He eventually became Assistant Director under Col. John Almond, attained the rank of Lieut-Colonel, and was decorated with membership in the Order of the British Empire. After demobilization, MacDonald's prominence in Baptist spheres only increased; he was called to the Wolfville pastorate and became President of Convention in 1920. In 1923 Macdonald became Professor of Church History at Acadia University.

William Fowler Parker (1855–1942) was the eldest Maritime Baptist chaplain, and second appointed. As President of Convention in 1914, Parker lobbied for temperance, Belgian relief and his denomination's presence in the chaplaincy. In August 1915 Parker received a commission to the 64th Battalion which conveniently mobilized in Sussex, NB, his home and pastoral field. While engaged in hospital work in both

England and France, Parker kept Maritime Baptist readers informed of his experiences. In the Etaples hospital bombings, May 1918, Parker's right leg was severely injured by German shrapnel. After a period of rest in Toronto, Parker returned to Sussex with a long-term position as postmaster.

Steeped in a lineage of Baptist ministers, **Frederick Seely Porter** (1880–19??) was conducting a successful ministry at Germain Street Baptist in Saint John, NB when he was made chaplain of the 104th Battalion in April 1916. Noted for his “coolness under shellfire,” Porter “enjoyed good health throughout his period of active service” and was promoted to Major. Porter also contributed to the Maritime Baptist, emphasizing the war’s political and historical significance alongside the day-to-day work in the field. Once home, Porter took an administrative position with the Canadian Bible Society.

Before sailing from Halifax in the summer of 1916, **Joseph Dimock Spidell** (1871–1955) made waves in his long Kentville pastorate. A powerful orator, Spidell transferred those abilities to recruiting drives and an ambitious, yet unsuccessful Tory candidacy in the 1916 provincial election. His persistence in promoting patriotism among the Baptists paid off with a chaplaincy appointment in England. From his lack of printed letters, we have little insight into Spidell’s personal war experience, but he did serve in France without injury. After demobilization, Spidell returned to the pulpit in Liverpool, NS

The ancestor of many notable African-Canadians, **William Andrew White** (1874–1936) helped recruit for, and served overseas with the No. 2 Construction Battalion as the segregated unit’s chaplain. For 16 months, White kept a detailed regular diary of his life in uniform which covered everything from weather conditions to recreation to sermon outlines. White’s chaplaincy spurred his transition between two lengthy ministries: twelve years before the war at the Zion church of Truro and from 1919 until his passing at Cornwallis Street in Halifax.

George Albert Lawson (1872–1939) departed one of the largest Maritime Baptist churches to become chaplain of the 145th Battalion. First Moncton had recently rebounded from a building fire with a new stone edifice, but their fragile minister’s health did not enjoy a corresponding

boost. Nevertheless, Lawson carried on his journey to the front but barely lasted a month in France. Shell-shocked so badly that he lost his voice, Lawson spent the waning months of the war in recovery and eventually continued pastoring in the United States.

James Clement Wilson (1879–1966) had only been in Doaktown, NB for a few months when he enlisted in the 132nd Battalion. While silent toward Maritime Baptist readers during his tenure in England and France, Wilson made his opinions known to Lieut.-Col. MacDonald. Hailing from the Free Baptist tradition, Wilson diverged from the ecumenical, optimistic social gospel of his superior. Studying and ministering in the U.S. after the war, Wilson eventually obtained a job as Postmaster in the place of his upbringing, Grand Manan Island.

The Maritime Baptist chaplains were, by and large, influential men of their denomination and home communities. In a complicated ethical framework, the inherent patriotism in the chaplains' Anglo-dominant society intertwined with deep personal concern for the well-being of the young men they were often personally recruiting as soldiers. Due to the hazards of alcohol and moral licentiousness, vice was considered a more dangerous enemy than the German forces, so chaplains took it upon themselves to shepherd souls as well as encourage the fight. Even when laying aside the war's theological and psychological effects, overseas service still marked a professional shift for each of the chaplains. Only three of the seven returned to pastoral ministry in the Maritimes; none returned to lead their pre-war congregation.

Zachary Cooper is a student of Acadia University and received a special grant to research the Maritime Baptist ministers who became chaplains in The Great War. This is to recognize the centenary of the war (1914–1918).



The Rev'd John Howard MacDonald, Maritime Baptist chaplain, World War I

Circle of Friends

“Circle of Friends” is a weekly peer-to-peer intervention where socially-isolated older adults gather with other volunteer older adults to enjoy a hot meal and socialize. These gatherings aim to foster new relationships and promote peer social support. Imbedded in the program are educational sessions on topics of interest. The goal is to decrease the degree of social isolation by creating a positive space for older adults with opportunity for participants to become involved in meaningful social activities and to connect to other community resources.

Social isolation occurs when an individual has limited social contact and/or few social relationships. It is an important issue as it can—and does—contribute to harmful health and social outcomes. (Nicholson, N.R. (2009). Social isolation in older adults: An evolutionary concept analysis. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 65(6), 1342–1352.)

Circle of Friends (CoF) has nine community partners including five churches from downtown Burlington (two Anglican, two United, one Presbyterian), Burlington Seniors’ Centre, Acclaim Health (Burlington’s local community healthcare provider agency), and the School of Nursing at McMaster University. On the Advisory Committee, Burlington Baptist Church, the host church and in the lead role, has four members and each partner has one member. The Advisory Committee met four times to discuss progress and to identify resources to support the program.

The School of Nursing assisted with program evaluation and reported results at two time-points (baseline and end of program). Students encountered a “real world” experience in a unique and positive venue to build capacity about their knowledge of socially-isolated older adults. Their faculty supervisor provided a scholarly foundation to the students’ learning.

The volunteers also met three times to discuss program progress, make suggestions to improve the experiences of participants and



Mae Radford, Burlington

volunteers, and implement changes. Through discussion, we learned that ten weeks were too few and in year two fifteen times would be an improvement.

CoF developed and implemented a carefully-planned program. Fifteen older adults were accepted by referral to attend for ten consecutive Wednesdays. The participants attended a two-hour session each Wednesday from 11:30 am until 1:30 pm. On day one and even on to the third meeting, participants arrived with some reluctance, were quiet, unsure and one person wanted to go home. Changes started about week three; some arrived with smiles, seeking out a face that looked a bit familiar to sit with and more conversations happened. The hot homemade meal, prepared by volunteers, was yummy and they loved it as the volunteers served at tables set attractively with tablecloths and fresh flower centre pieces. Programs varied from playing games, presentations and listening to music.

Who are the participants? Community partners who have a keen interest in supporting programs for older adults, such as, Acclaim Health, Alzheimer Society and Local Health Integration Networks, identified and referred vulnerable older adults. Once participants were identified, an experienced counselor met with them in their homes to discuss CoF and invited and encouraged them to attend. The Counselor, in turn, provided the participant's information to the Program Coordinator. Transportation arrangements with a volunteer driver were made for the older adults to attend, with a follow-up telephone reminder call each Tuesday. The program is completely volunteer-driven; seniors helping seniors. Each Wednesday, participants shared in conversation with their peers, volunteers and students. Volunteers started recognizing specific needs and chatted about possibilities to address the needs.

To provide information relevant to the participants, guest speakers were invited including a person from the Burlington Seniors' Centre, the public library, public transportation, fraud/policing, visiting therapy dogs, and special musical guests. Through conversations, participants learned about other luncheons and events that are held at other churches and venues in the area, and other interesting activities that they could join.

Excerpts from Participant Progress Notes written by a volunteer: "FG was brighter today and commented more than once about music and 'nice people'... Four times he said how great it was for him to get out of his place for Wed. lunch, enjoying chatting with people, likes the programs... In earlier days, he was a Researcher at a university... Today, he even had his shoes on... I reminded him about issues re his meds, not knowing what they are for, not taking them. I pointed out risk following his stroke if he doesn't follow the regime... now much more comfortable in a group, more talkative...has attended all 10 weeks, very appreciative...has not done much if anything to get set up for alternate activities. I told him in a nice way that it really is up to him, that no one is going to do next steps for him—but he can get help if he decides what it is he wishes to do re getting his transportation options lined up and then trying something e.g. Seniors Centre."

Our volunteers are valued. Their contributions are significant. Volunteers make it work.

Mae Radford, Burlington, ON. Prior to retirement, Mae, a registered nurse, served in hospitals and VON Community Support Services. Now she serves the community through Rotary and on the Boards of Directors, Joseph Brant Hospital and Carpenter Hospice. Mae is the Program Coordinator of Circle of Friends. She and her husband Bert are members of Burlington Baptist Church.

News and Notes

We express our sympathy to the Rev'd John Tonks, President of the CABF, and his extended family, for the passing of his brother, the Rev'd Gary Tonks this summer. Gary was a chaplain in the Canadian armed forces.

We welcome the Rev'd Marlene Knowles as an accredited minister of the CABF this summer. A Minister of high standing, she has served the Windsor Baptist Church (twice: Interim, and Minister of Outreach), the Sackville Baptist Church, and South End Baptist, Dartmouth, NS, as well as Chaplain at Oakwood Terrace, Dartmouth. She brings to us a wealth of knowledge and experience.

*CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR
BAPTIST FREEDOMS*
Annual General Meeting

You are invited to the autumn General Meeting at
The Manning Memorial Chapel, Acadia University
13 – 14 October 2017



Special Speaker: The Rev'd Jamie Scott
Topic: The Uncomfortable Journey of Reconciliation

Friday Evening
Registration: 7:00 p.m.
Programme: 7:30 p.m.
Holy Communion: 9:15 p.m.

Saturday Morning
Registration: 8:30 a.m.
Devotional: 9:00 a.m.
Programme: 9:30 a.m.
Business Meeting: 11:00 a.m.

