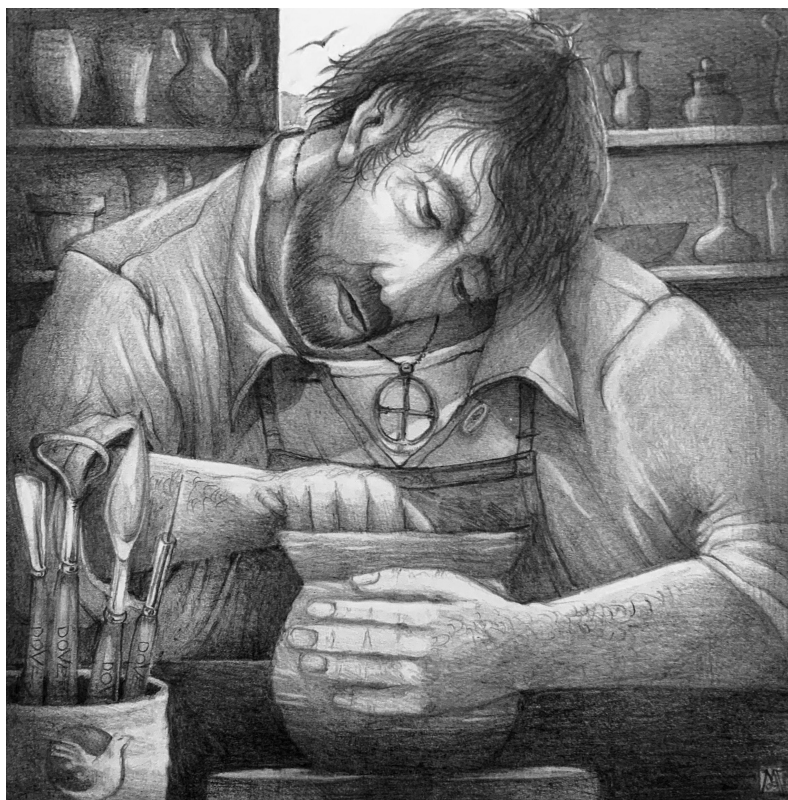


The Bulletin

A PUBLICATION OF THE
CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR BAPTIST FREEDOMS



Spring 2021



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

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ON THE COVER

The Potter by Matthew Cupido

Editorial

BY SCOTT KINDRED-BARNES

¶ This edition of *The Bulletin* is the fourth to appear since the pandemic hit Canada. As I write, parts of Ontario and Western Canada have been hit by record numbers of Covid-19 cases. While many people have received vaccinations, there is little indication that things are going back to ‘normal’ any time soon. Thus, I hope this edition will provide some encouraging words and wisdom during a time when endurance is needed. We begin with a timely Devotional by Anita Flowers. Many people are feeling Covid fatigue, and a ‘second wind’ is just what we need. For better or for ill, zoom has now become part of the lives of many Christians today. If you are determined to never hit a zoom link again, articles by Joe Foy and Anthony Siegrist might change your mind as each offers insight into how people have benefited and learned over the past year from this media. Articles by Diana Shelley and Roger Cann each speak respectively to the connection between mission and ecumenicism. Cann’s article presents us with wisdom from a past era in India, while Shelley introduces how the Wolfville Area Food Bank began, along with how it has continued to meet its mission despite the Pandemic. I hope you enjoy this edition.



The Rev. Dr. Scott Kindred-Barnes is the Senior Minister at Wolfville Baptist Church in Nova Scotia.

We all need a second wind right now

BY ANITA FLOWERS

¶ In high school, I ran on the boys' cross-country team, because in the early years of Title IX in the United States, my school did not have a girls' team. As a result, I was usually running alone and competing with only one or two girls from other schools in each meet.



In those 5 K cross country races, I often passed guys who, on the back trails and out of sight of their coaches, had given up. They were walking it in. Interestingly, they were often inspired to run again when they realized they were going to finish behind a girl. It certainly gave me a second wind to make sure they did.

I still think of myself as a runner, although now I'm more of a walk/runner and slower than a herd of turtles. In long races, one thing I've learned to hope for is getting my second wind. Several theories offer explanations for what's known as a "second wind", the sudden boost of energy that some runners feel late in a long run. The simplest theories credit endorphins and the runners high or the decrease in lactic acid as your body warms up. Other explanations are purely psychological. The boost may come from knowing that you're more than halfway finished. It's a "you've got this" feeling. It's mile 11 of a half marathon after that brutal 10th mile.

When I was running in my first half marathon at age 50, I was repeatedly surprised by spectators on the sidelines cheering me on - by name. "Go Anita! Anita, you can do it! You're halfway there, Anita!" How did they know my name? At first, I squinted to see if I could recognize them under their caps and sunglasses. Then, I glanced down and realized that my name was plastered across my

chest in giant letters on my race bib. Those strangers calling my name helped me find the breath and the stamina to keep going and finish the race.

A second wind. It's when you're going through a hard time, and realize that you can, just possibly, make it. It's what we all need right now. After more than a year of pandemic restrictions and worry, and while we all just want it to be OVER, we need the stamina and strength to just hang on. The Hebrew word *ruach* means "wind" or "breath" and is often translated as breath of God or breath of life. That life-giving breath often comes just at the time when we need it, mile 10 of a half-marathon or month fifteen of a global pandemic. Sometimes we feel it when someone calls our name. At other times, we inhale it in the life-giving breath of prayer or meditation. Sometimes, it is simply the wind in our hair on our daily walk.

In her book, *Help, Thanks, Wow: The Three Essential Prayers*, writer Anne Lamott talks about grace as a second wind: "*But grace can be the experience of a second wind, when even though what you want is clarity and resolution, what you get is stamina and poignancy and the strength to hang on.*" A second wind gives us the energy and stamina to make it to the end of the run, the end of the pandemic - or whatever comes next. The grace to get up each morning and face whatever problems the day will bring. The grace to remember that we can still wave to our neighbors and chat by video with our distant family. We can embody that grace for others as we cheer each other through the race.

Anita Flowers is a member of Port Williams United Baptist Church in Nova Scotia.

Zooming into the Future & the Past?

BY JOE FOY

¶ In Nova Scotia, our first Covid restrictions began over year ago in March 2020. Since then, one huge new factor that has crashed into our lives is zoom. I had not even heard of zoom in March. I did not click on my first zoom link until September. Recently, a zoom episode rocked me back on my heels, and taught me a lesson. Eleven of my siblings and I began ‘zooming’ for an hour every Sunday evening. This has been an unexpected blessing. I am originally a Missouri boy, and my siblings are spread out from here to Idaho. As a result, the family manages to get together only about once every three years.



In September one of my nine sisters suggested that we try gathering on zoom. I was very skeptical, never having done it, and not being keen on new technology. However, to my surprise, the ‘zooming’ got off to a good start. And then one evening it became Spirited, and our family has never been the same since. Some of my sisters and brothers are closer to one another than others, but the family is pretty-close knit. We have never had any feuds among us. But dealing with our Dad became a challenge.

To keep his large family going, my father worked six days a week for forty-two years. As pressures increased, and the workplace became more cutthroat, he began to wilt under the pressure, and the ‘demon whiskey’ entered the picture. Big time. As a result, the last decade of his life was a very-difficult time for him and everyone else. Since his passing forty years ago, my Dad has been the ‘elephant in the room’, so far as family conversations are concerned. For that reason, he has only rarely been mentioned among us.

Fast forward to Covid-19, when my family started to zoom, and the unexpected occurred. After several hilarious false starts where twelve people tried to talk at once, we decided we needed a ‘Chair’ and a weekly theme. We started with stories about our beloved Aunt Mil, who lived with us for twenty-five years, and was really a second mother to all of us. Everyone took turns joining the conversation. It went well, and so over time we moved on to stories about Mom, then about Grandma, Grandpa, this sibling, that sibling, etc. Finally, one evening I suggested “How about some positive stories about Dad?” Complete silence followed. Then, somewhat hesitantly, they agreed. The following week, I started in with a memory of some great times he and I had canoeing together. One by one everyone followed, each with their own positive, even humorous stories about Dad.

Twenty-three years separates me from my youngest sibling, so each of us had a story that others did not know! The cumulative effect of this sharing was stunning. Sharing some positive memories initiated some deep communal healing. I am not sure this would have happened without zoom. Now everyone seems quite comfortable speaking about my father as we recognize there were indeed good times along with the bad. One of my sisters is more studied in psychology than the rest of us. She said: “Our family is in a new place now, after all these years: the older ones and the younger ones are more comfortable with each other’s past.” I can still hardly believe it. For better or for worse, zoom is changing how people communicate. And some of it without a doubt is positive.

Joe Foy lives Hantsport, Nova Scotia. He is a Roman Catholic churchman and committed ecumenist.

Ministering from the Prayer Bunker

BY ANTHONY G. SIEGRIST

¶ I called the space the “prayer bunker.” It was nothing really, just a corner of the basement, wedged between the water heater and my sons’ massive box fort. I put a makeshift cross on the wall made from a plastic bat and a hockey stick. In the early months of the pandemic that was where I went to check the graphs of Covid-19 infections and lead online prayer services. I’m no longer working out of that makeshift space, but it’s still the image that connects with my memory of pastoring during the early days of this pandemic. It took the Mennonite congregation I serve in Ottawa a few months to find its new rhythm. We are more settled now, and, though there are still many unknowns, things don’t feel nearly as makeshift.



For Mennonites, as for others, the pandemic has been a bit like the biblical refiner’s fire or launderer’s soap. It has been difficult, but we’ve learned some valuable lessons along the way. Mennonites, and other Anabaptists, are known for being a bit skeptical of new technologies. The pandemic has forced us to think hard about worship in virtual space. After trying a few different things, the congregation I serve has found that ZOOM fits our ecclesiology better than do some alternatives. ZOOM allows us to gather in real time and even allows a back-and-forth that some alternative technologies do not. Though we wouldn’t have tried it without something like a global pandemic to force the issue, many Mennonite congregations have found that online technologies make their worship more accessible to those who are traveling or homebound.

Online worship has been the big adjustment, but we’ve learned a host of things from it. I can rattle off a few lessons:

We've learned that for those of us in urban areas public outdoor spaces are invaluable. Parks, arboretums, and beaches have been the places where our small groups have been able to safely gather.

We've learned that prior relationships and trust are very important for those of us conducting church business. It's been harder to communicate, so working with church members and staff that have our confidence is crucial.

We've learned that music, especially the music of our own congregation, is important to our experience of worship and prayer. Many Mennonites miss being able to sing together.

Since we've been asked to stay home so much, we've also gained a new appreciation for "home." Home is a set of relationships, a space, a sense of familiarity, and when or if it isn't nurturing, life can be tenuous.

I cannot speak for all my colleagues, but I know that I've gained a renewed appreciation for the Bible. Who would have expected that the Bible had so much to say about our experience of a twenty-first-century pandemic? This has been a boon to those of us who preach.

Most fundamentally, I think Mennonites have had their value of the church reinforced. Over the past year our churches have been communities of support. Sometimes this has simply taken the form of having someone with whom to talk. Sometimes this has meant having meals delivered or even financial assistance. The faith our churches nurture has been essential as we find ourselves in need of courage and hope. We've learned that the church, an actual group of people with actual relationships and a shared commitment to God, is a cornerstone of our lives. I had a sense of that in the early days, as I recorded sermons in my prayer bunker, but the last year has certainly driven the point home.

Dr. Anthony G. Siegrist holds ThD from the University of Toronto. He is the Lead Pastor of Ottawa Mennonite Church in Ontario.

Wolfville Area Food Bank & Covid-19

BY DIANA SHELLEY

¶ The Wolfville Area Inter Church Council (WA-ICC) had run a “food voucher” programme since shortly after the Council’s inception in 1970. This programme provided vouchers for people who had difficulties obtaining enough to feed themselves and their families. How did the food bank come into being in Wolfville?



In 2005, the *Halifax Metro Food Bank* expanded to become *Feed Nova Scotia* and extended its coverage area from the city to other parts of the province. It was at this point that the question was asked at WAICC: Should Wolfville have a food bank? There were two schools of thought in answer to this question: that it was a very good idea; and that, *no*, Wolfville *did not need* a food bank. One town councilor was quoted as having said, “there is no poverty in Wolfville.” However, it was agreed that the idea of opening a food bank would be explored further and, in the fall of 2006, WAICC established a Food Bank Feasibility Committee. This committee reported back in November in favour of a food bank and, after considering some potential locations, their recommendation was that it should be held in the Wolfville Baptist Church (WBC).

The Wolfville Area Food Bank opened its doors on February 1, 2007! It was decided that the food bank would be held twice a month and that clients would come once a month. Initially, fewer than 20 families attended each food bank. More recently, in pre-Covid days we were seeing approximately 110 families per month – an average of about 270 people. WBC has been very generous and accommodating of the food bank’s needs. Initially, and for several years thereafter, we were using some small rooms and a hallway in

the church basement: today we use those room plus the church's large downstairs hall. The Feasibility Committee, as part of its work had visited a number of local food banks: It noted a considerable difference in the way these food banks were operated. From the outset we felt it especially important that the Wolfville Area Food Bank be a friendly and non-judgmental place for people to come. To this end, it is great to be able to report that we have had clients say how they dreaded coming on their first visit but very quickly came to look forward to their food bank day!

On Thursday March 4, 2020 we held a very normal food bank; and then along came Covid-19. We quickly realized that we could no longer continue as we had been doing. Our setup allowed for no possibility of social distancing and the amount of cleaning of all the surfaces needed, with the number of volunteers working at any one time in a food bank week and especially on food bank day when clients attended, was not practical, or indeed doable. In an incredibly short period of time, our committee members using some wonderful organizational skills, set up a system whereby the number of volunteers working at the church at any one time had been greatly cut to allow for six-foot distancing and all the orders could be delivered to the clients' homes. Surface cleaning was also taken care of by having a designated person come in after each session. It was a drastic change to the way we operated and sadly changed our relationship with our clients.

I am writing this in March of 2021 – a whole year after we made the changes. How long will it continue? We do not know. We would of course like to think that at some time we might go back to our old ways. But, with no knowledge of that future in post-Covid-19 days, we have sadly decided to continue as we are for the coming months and to review things periodically as the situation changes.

Diana Shelley lives in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. She is a member of Wolfville Baptist Church and serves as the Co-Chair of the Wolfville Area Food Bank.

Enhanced Vision

BY ROGER CANN

¶ Missionary experience in India gave me a new set of lenses to view God's mission in the world. By 1956, when we arrived in India as Canadian Baptist missionaries, all the Protestant denominations active in the country had more than 50 years experience in their Comity Agreements. These were formal agreements as where denominations would focus their mission endeavors. The result was that the Baptist churches which we were joining were the sole active Christian agencies amongst the four million people in the Northern Circars of the Madras Presidency. German Lutherans were active across the border in Orissa State. The exception was the Church of South India which provided pastoral care to their parish in Visakhapatnam, the major seaport in the area. There were similar allocations of territory in most of the country. Implicit in these Comity Agreements was mutual recognition of the validity of the order of clergy and the liturgies of participating Christian denominations. I felt a tremendous sense of freedom, freedom from sectarian expectations. Outside of our designated area, we followed the liturgy of the churches in that area CSI or Lutheran. Graduates of the Baptist theological colleges were called to serve in Methodist parishes.



There was a freshness to church life. I felt called to the whole church. While India relished its independence, the uncertainty for churches in China, we took as a sign of what could happen in India, and the foreign missionaries were not permanent.

At the state level, with Telugu as our common language, we planned and carried out workshops and ministries co-operatively. Each April more than 10,000 Christians would come to the banks of the Krishna River and camp under a huge pandal. The village churches contributed the necessary funds. Whole families came

with food supplies to enjoy a week of ecumenical worship and study. This was indeed the Body of Christ.

As would be expected in such a milieu, 25 years ago the Andhra Christian Theological College was established with faculty from a variety of denominational backgrounds. I was emboldened to establish a recording studio to produce Christian radio programs. We encouraged Christian poets to compile Telugu hymns common to all areas and the Christian Literature Society produced a common hymnbook for the whole state. Those involved with the Bible correspondence course expanded the course offerings, which we promoted through our radio programs, adding 2 to 300 new students every month.

Also, by 1968 Roman Catholic university authorities were inviting Protestant speakers to their universities. Their priests in training spent months at the radio studio and participated in our programming. For them this was ecumenism in full flower, the Spirit of God revealed. In our immediate district Komma caste Hindus would hold Bible camps. They invited Christian speakers to family gatherings at Christmas and Easter time. The Henry Martyn Institute was opened in Hyderabad with Christian, Hindu and Moslem support. We were encouraged to think that a wider inter-faith fellowship was possible.

Indeed, in my view God's mission was enhanced.

The Rev. Dr. Roger Cann is a retired Baptist minister who lives in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. A long-time supporter of the ABF/CABF, Dr. Cann's ecumenical influence has extended far and wide, including his past work on the Canadian Council of Churches.

CABF News

📌 LAPEL PINS to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of ABF/CABF are available from the Treasurer at a cost of \$10 each and can be obtained by sending an e-Transfer to cabftreasurer@gmail.com and adding a name and mailing address in the “add a message” section of the e-Transfer or sending your request and a cheque to the Treasurer.



📌 The CABF sends Condolences to the family and friends of the REV. DR. NEIL GLADSTONE PRICE who died peacefully in Greenwich on December 27, 2020 at age 104. A memorial service was held at Wolfville Baptist Church on Sunday, Jan 3, 2021. Dr. Price served as a minister in Ontario and the Maritime provinces, finishing his ministry at Wolfville Baptist Church, 1973-1984. Neil served as the President of the United Baptist Atlantic Convention, Chairman of the Outreach Commission of the Baptist Federation (CBF) of Canada, and CBF representative for the Canadian Council of Justice, Corrections and Religious Liberty Commission. Neil was also the longest serving member of the Board of Governors of Acadia retiring in his 90's. He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Divinity by Acadia University in 2006 and, at the age of 103 in 2019, he received Acadia's lifetime achievement award. “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

📌 The CABF is pleased to announce The Rev. Dr. Marjorie Lewis, Chaplain, Acadia University, as this year's Vin Rushton Speaker. Topic: The Changing Context of Ministry in the 21st Century. Date: Saturday, June 5, 2021. Due to current Covid-19 restrictions, this event will be virtual only. Details will be posted on the CABF website. Please register for the Rushton Lecture by mailing the Treasurer (PO Box 217, Mahone Bay, NS B0J 2E0) or sending an email to cabftreasurer@gmail.com. There is no registration fee,

however, anyone wishing to help with expenses can send a donation of \$10.00 by e-Transfer or regular mail to the Treasurer at the above address.

☛ The Swiss Roman Catholic priest, theologian and author, HANS KÜNG died 6 April 2021 at the age of 93. The author of more than 50 books, Küng was known for pushing the boundaries of Catholic thought, his liberal theology, and his outspoken responses to issues considered controversial among Catholics, including ecclesiology, the ordination of women, homosexuality, abortion, birth control, priestly celibacy, and the meaning of hell. It is widely known that in 1979 Pope John Paul II removed Küng's theological authority, which prevented him from holding ecclesiastical office or teaching with the Roman Catholic Church's sanction. For many, including Küng himself, such discipline from the Roman Curia became a kind of badge of honour, which further augmented his growing reputation as an independent thinker. In the classroom, and on the lecture circuit, Küng pushed the boundaries of traditional orthodoxy, all along pushing for further reform of the Church he knew as home. A joke was told among theologians of all stripes that Küng would never want to be Pope since then he would become infallible. In 2003 his memoirs were translated from German into English under the title *My Struggle For Freedom*.



“In our moment of fear and Insecurity, we may be tempted to hold on to what was once safe and secure. Prophetic tradition knows, to the contrary, that the future does not reside in old, treasured realities. It belongs, rather, to bold faithful thought that evokes bold faithful action. This has always been the prophetic task, and it is now, in this freighted moment, our prophetic task.”

WALTER BRUEGGEMANN



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