

The Bulletin

A Publication of the
Canadian Association for Baptist Freedoms
(formerly Atlantic Baptist Fellowship)

Peace on
Earth

Fall, 2012

from the Editor.....

“I’m really not as bad as I am made out to be....

In all the Christmas pageants

*I’m usually depicted as rich, overweight, insensitive,
uncaring and heartless;
speaking harshly to Joseph and Mary
and slamming the door in their faces!*

But I’m not like that! I’m actually a lot like you.

*I’m a very ordinary man, you meet dozens like me
every day, and you don’t dislike **them**.*

I’m the Innkeeper,

and I’d like to tell you my story.

And then, maybe

you will understand how I feel.

I remember it well... actually; no one will let me forget!

There were thousands of tourists

in the tiny town Bethlehem that year.

With the census being taken,

everyone with any connection

*to King David’s family, no matter how distant,
flocked here to Bethlehem.*

You wouldn’t believe how many people

wanted to claim their royal heritage!

My Inn was full, all the time.

- my own relatives all stayed with us

(at no charge, of course...)

- my wife’s relatives all stayed with us

(at no charge, of course...)

- relatives we didn’t even know existed showed up

and stayed with us (at no charge, of course...)

*And let's not forget the Roman soldiers and officials
who can stay wherever they choose
(at no charge, of course!)*

*And, yes, there were many paying customers as well;
business was good. My Inn was full, full, full.*

*Oh, and about my "Inn",
I'm sure you folks see in your mind something like
a Holiday Inn with 75 rooms and a restaurant
and a pool....
and free parking for 100 camels and donkeys...*

*My "Inn" was my **house** - nothing more.*

*It had three rooms:
a sitting and eating room,
a kitchen,
and a sleeping room.*

*There were no beds, just mats - mats everywhere!
Barely room to move, often people spilled over
to sleep in the eating room and the kitchen
And in good weather, we could open the hatch
to the flat roof and some more could sleep up there
in the open air.
As I said, there was barely room to move.*

Then Joseph and Mary showed up.

*(By the way, I think they are very distant relatives, too)
They were very tired, and poor Mary was so pregnant.
And contrary to so many people's opinions,
I didn't turn them away. I did what I could.
I gave them the only alternative available, the stable.
Primitive, yes, but usable and private.
Considering Mary's condition,
do you think she would have wanted
to be crowded into a room
full of strange men and women,
and all their kids?*

*So, I did what I could, just gave them the old stable,
where they could at least be safe,
and have some measure of privacy.
Joseph was actually very relieved,
and thanked me, as we spread some fresh hay
in a corner, and settled Mary into its warm comfort.*

If only I had known...

*I wish now I could have done more...
I wish now I **had** done more...*

If only I had known...

*I might have moved some guests...
I might have cleared a spot in the kitchen,
I might have given them my own space, my own mat.*

If only I had known...but I didn't.

*And because of my actions, my choices,
Jesus, the Messiah, was born in a stable, **my** stable.
And without my realizing it,
I helped to bring about God's plan,
for His Son to be identified
with the poor and humble.*

*So much for **my** story,
I didn't know.*

*But you **do** know who Jesus is;
what's **your** story?*



**[Rev. Dr.] Dan Gibson, President,
Canadian Association for Baptist Freedoms**

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Resolution on Restoring Chaplaincy Services to Inmates in Canadian Prisons

(Editor's Note: At our Fall Annual Meeting of the CABF, the matter of the government cuts to prison chaplaincy was dealt with. Rev. John Boyd and Rev. John Tonks prepared the following resolution which was passed by the assembly.)

Whereas the Canadian Association for Baptist Freedoms sees Religious Freedom as the affirmation of freedom of religion, freedom for religion, and freedom from religion, and

Whereas the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms ensures that all Canadians have *freedom of conscience and religion*, and

Whereas then Chief Justice Brian Dickson wrote in a 1985 decision that religious freedom according to the Charter includes *the right to entertain such religious beliefs as a person chooses, the right to declare religious beliefs openly and without fear of hindrance or reprisal, and the right to manifest religious belief by worship and practice or by teaching and dissemination*, and

Whereas the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) Article 18 states that: *Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance*, and

Whereas the U.N. Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners expand these principles in Sections 41 and 42 as follows:

41. (1) If the institution contains a sufficient number of prisoners of the same religion, a qualified representative of that religion shall be appointed or approved. If the number of prisoners justifies it and conditions permit, the arrangement should be on a full-time basis.

41. (2) A qualified representative appointed or approved under paragraph (1) shall be allowed to hold regular services and to pay pastoral visits in private to prisoners of his religion at proper times.

41. (3) Access to a qualified representative of any religion shall not be refused to any prisoner. On the other hand, if any prisoner should object to a visit of any religious representative, his attitude shall be fully respected.

42. As far as practicable, every prisoner shall be allowed to satisfy the needs of his religious life by attending the services provided in the institution and having in his possession the books of religious observance and instruction of his denomination, and

Whereas the importance of the spiritual dimension of life is also incorporated in the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, Sections 75 and 83, and in Regulations 98 to 101¹, and

Whereas inmates in Canadian prisons continue to have the right to practice their religion, which includes access to trained, certified and accredited religious leaders (priests, rabbis, imams, ministers, etc.) of their religious tradition, and

Whereas a leader of one religious tradition cannot administer the rites, teach the beliefs and practices, read and interpret the sacred texts or offer the wise counsel of another religious tradition, and

Whereas the provision of appropriate religious rites, counsel and teaching to inmates has been an effective way to enable rehabilitation and to reduce recidivism, and

Whereas the large number of faith based volunteers exist because of the continual recruitment, training, mentoring and encouraging efforts of contract chaplains, and

Whereas the Chaplaincy programs developed by trained chaplains complement and supplement the Cognitive/ Behavioural based programs offered by Correctional Service of Canada staff, and

Whereas the Correctional Service of Canada programs attempt to change thinking and behaviour, the Chaplaincy programs add the additional dimension of transformation which goes to the core of

the individual where healing of factors that lead to a criminal life-style takes place, strengthens the change of attitude (thinking) and action (behaviour) thus equipping the individual to live productive pro-social lives upon their release, contributing to the government's commitment to safer communities, and

Whereas it is has been proven both effective and practical over many years to deliver this service through a combination of paid full time chaplains, paid part time chaplains and volunteers from all religious traditions,

Be it resolved that the Canadian Association for Baptist Freedoms write to the Government of Canada requesting that the Minister of Justice rescind the decision to cancel all part-time chaplaincy contracts in Correctional Service of Canada.

¹Sections 75 - An inmate is entitled to reasonable opportunities to freely and openly participate in, and express, religion or spirituality, subject to such reasonable limits as are proscribed for protecting the security of the penitentiary or the safety of persons"; and,

Section 83 - For greater certainty, aboriginal spirituality and aboriginal spiritual leaders and elders have the same status as other religions and other religious leaders;

The Service shall take all reasonable steps to make available to aboriginal inmates the services of an aboriginal spiritual leader or elder after consultation with:

the National Aboriginal Advisory Committee and the appropriate regional and local aboriginal advisory committees, if such committees have been established pursuant to that section.

The Corrections and Conditional Release Regulations (CCRR), Section 100, adds:

Every inmate shall be entitled to express the inmate's religion or spirituality in accordance with section 75 of the Act to the extent that the expression of the inmate's religion or spirituality does not jeopardize the security of the penitentiary or the safety of any person; or involve contraband.

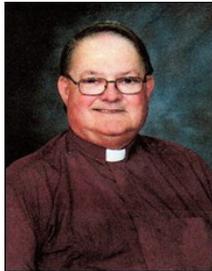
Sections 98 and 99 apply in respect of any assembly of inmates held for the purpose of expressing a religion or spirituality.

And CCRR s.101 reads as follows:

The Service shall ensure that, where practicable, the necessities that are not contraband and that are reasonably required by an inmate for the inmate's religion or spirituality are made available to the inmate, including



***Rev. John Boyd
is Minister of
FBC Halifax***



***Rev. John Tonks
is a retired
Baptist Chaplain***

- interfaith chaplaincy services;
- facilities for the expression of the religion or spirituality;
- a special diet as required by the inmate's religious or spiritual tenets; and
- the necessities related to special religious or spiritual rites of the inmate.



Why a Baptist Peace Fellowship?

by Ken Sehested

In my role as a promoter, trying to get Baptist folk to join the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America, this concern (in variant forms) occasionally surfaces: Why a Baptist Peace Fellowship? Shouldn't we be ecumenical in our justice and peace involvements? Doesn't the existence of a Baptist peace fellowship perpetuate our legacy of religious exclusivity and bigotry? Unfortunately, our reputation as an arrogant, sectarian people is mostly deserved. Therefore it is with good reason that some question the need for an explicitly Baptist peace fellowship.

My response to such questions always focuses on a key strategic rationale. Social change does not happen in general; it always occurs in particular. As A. N. Whitehead noted, "We think in generalities, we live in detail." Particular change means change within the context of particular institutions, which means, if we're to be effective in our work, we must tend to the details of particular institutions and communicate within the framework of particular cultures. Collectively, Baptist institutions in North America are massive, claiming a combined membership of some 30 million people (not counting unbaptized children). With some exceptions, progressive movements - those dealing with justice and peace issues - have few entry points into the subculture of Baptist institutions. By and large their voices simply are not heard; or, if heard, not heeded, primarily because the vocabulary and appeals to authority are so different from our traditional language of faith. What more valuable task could be done than organizing a largely unorganized constituency?

There is also a theological component to the rationale for our work. I do believe that our Anabaptist heritage has insights especially significant for our modern crisis. But I'll hold that discussion for another occasion. Suffice it to say that I consider it crucial that our Fellowship join in common voice with any and every chorus which shares components of our vision - a vision which we as Christians name as the Kingdom or Reign of God, a vision which declares that the day is coming when *"the wolf shall dwell with the lamb"* (Isaiah 11), when a *"new heaven and a new earth"* will be revealed (Isaiah 65, Revelation 21), when *"bows of the mighty are broken"* and when *"justice and peace will embrace"* (Psalm 85), when spears are hammered into pruning hooks (Micah 3), when captives are set free (Luke 4) and when *"creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay."* (Romans 8)

Applying the weight of our conviction and energies with others in common work is important. We support and encourage it. And it is already going on in many places. But the romance and glamor of distant "mission fields" often cause us to forsake one much nearer to home: our own Baptist institutions.

Martin Luther King Jr. once wrote: *"Our most powerful nonviolent weapon is, as would be expected, also our most demanding, that is organization. To produce change, people must be organized to work together in units of power."* A key reason for having a Baptist peace fellowship is to influence the program and budget priorities of our various conventions - our particular institutions and constituencies - from the central offices of elected national leaders all the way down to the tens of thousands of local congregations they represent.

If we are to be effective in shaping the public witness of these bodies, we must work together, we must join and coordinate our efforts. And in doing so, we must be attentive to the particular customs and traditions of our people; we must speak with a language which shares common meaning and history; we must appeal to dialogue; we must engage in the patient process of establishing a consistent, credible presence; and we must undertake the time-consuming task of building a network of friends, contacts and co-workers.

Can you imagine this: One day, when the general public hears the word *Baptist*, they will think immediately of Gospel-inspired justice and peace work? Instead of associating the name with the follies of TV evangelists, wouldn't it be nice if they thought: Oh, those are the folks:

- who care for the poor /
- who resist racial discrimination?
- who speak out against gun barrel diplomacy?
- who care for the environment?

Imagine that!

Ken Sehested was the Founding Executive Director of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America.



ABF/CABF FINANCIAL REPORT

November 2012

Operating: Balance forward – Oct 31 **\$ 3,590.36**

Income:

Donations	30.00	
Bank Interest	<u>0.10</u>	
	30.10	

Expenses:

Bank Fees	1.40	
Fall Assembly	<u>799.25</u>	
	800.65	\$ 2,819.81

Grant: Balance forward – Oct 31 **\$12,776.16**

Income:

Expenses:

To Atlantic Baptist Foundation	<u>10,000.00</u>	
	10,000.00	\$ 2,776.16

Rushton: Balance forward – Oct 31 **\$ 2,440.28**

Income:

Expenses:

To Atlantic Baptist Foundation	<u>2,000.00</u>	
	2,000.00	\$ 440.28

BALANCE as of Nov 30, 2012 **\$ 6,036.25**

INVESTMENTS:

Operating	\$ 0.00
Grant	\$ 43,000.00
Rushton	\$ 7,000.00

Cynthia Ogilvie, Treasurer

Alliance of Baptists

In addition to the privilege of being Secretary of CABF, I have started my first of a three year commitment as a member of the **Alliance of Baptists**. Alliance of Baptist (Alliance) is another organization where historic Baptist principles, freedoms and traditions are lived and shared among all Baptists! Alliance is one of CABF's very active partners. I took greetings on behalf of CABF to Alliance and shared with Alliance our excitement at being renamed as *Canadian Association for Baptist Freedoms* (CABF) and about being recognized as a denomination by **Vital Statistics**.

I had the pleasure of attending my first Alliance Board Meeting in November. This meeting was held at Princeton, New Jersey. We were blessed with the hospitality of Christ Congregation church. Along with a busy and productive Board Meeting we shared worship, reviewed past commitments and experienced new learnings! Mandy England-Cole shared the hospitality she experienced when she attended CABF's Annual Meeting in October at Wolfville Baptist church. As a follow up to her visit, Mandy prepared a Statement of Solidarity between CABF and the Alliance. This statement will be presented to the Alliance membership at the spring Convocation. Alliance continues to be assertive with on-going fund raising efforts, missions and Alliance continues to work at mastering their processes and procedures on clergy recognition. They are holding a workshop in Atlanta in January where they will review and discuss many of the topics associate with recognition. We have many opportunities to learn from our Alliance brothers and sisters.



Lee Nicholas-Patillo is the
Secretary of CABF

I returned home with greeting for CABF from Alliance: congratulations for what we have accomplished over the past year and best wishes for continued successes. One shared vision CABF has with Alliance is that one day (sooner rather than later) we will be able to share our Annual Meeting and one of their Board meetings in the same location together. CABF and Alliance continue to work together, doing God's work with the gifts God has given us all.



***A great time was had at Wolfville Baptist Church for the 40th Annual CABF Meeting!
Can you find yourself?***





Rushton Memorial Lecture

Mark your calendar for Saturday, May 25, 2013!

We have opted for the last weekend in May to avoid conflicting with the Apple Blossom Festival in the Valley. The sessions and lunch will be At Manning Memorial Chapel, Acadia University.

The speaker will be David Jordan, from Charlotte, North Carolina. His topic is “Subversive Words”, which is the title of a book he has written.



Rev. Dr. David M. Jordan

A minister in Charlotte, North Carolina, David Jordan has studied, led groups, taught, and preached in more than thirty countries. David and his wife, Beth, live in Huntersville, North Carolina, with their three children. They enjoy music, sports, hiking, travel, and gardening.

He has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Furman University, a Master of Divinity degree from Southern Seminary, and Doctor of Ministry from Columbia Theological Seminary. He studied at the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland.



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Chester United Baptist Church
Falmouth United Baptist Church
First Baptist Church, Amherst
First Baptist Church, Halifax
Koinonia Baptist Church
Lawrencetown United Baptist Church
Lockhartville Baptist Church
Northwest Baptist Church
Port Williams United Baptist Church
Wolfville Baptist Church

