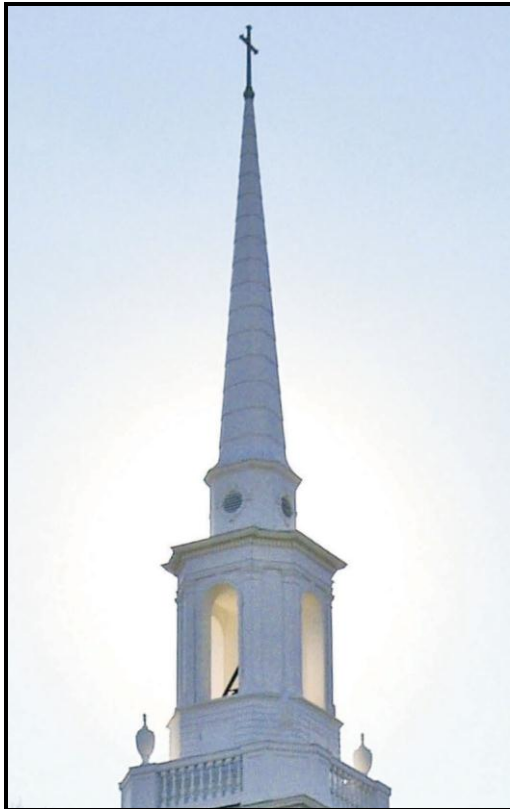


The Bulletin

An Atlantic Baptist Fellowship Publication



Manning Memorial Chapel
Acadia University
Site of the Vincent Rushton Lecture
Saturday, June 2, 2012

Spring, 2012

From the Editor.....

Happy Places & Safe Places

At a recent training session for fire department Medical First Responders, we were assigned the task of repeatedly taking each other's blood pressure readings. As mine was being taken for the umpteenth time by my partner, the nurse in charge wandered over and quietly said, "Dan, go to your happy place – and see the difference it makes." Immediately I thought of a wonderful holiday Susan and I had enjoyed some years ago. And my blood pressure reading at that moment registered a full 10 percent lower. A visit to a "happy place" memory can work wonders, and this simple stress-reducing trick made a world of difference!

Equally important in today's world are "safe places". We now take extraordinary measures to make our church buildings and activities safe place for children; as we have seen all too often the disastrous results when security and safety are neglected, and children are injured – or worse – abused by people or situations which could have been prevented.

But there is another "safe place" that is becoming a larger and more treasured part of my life. In recent years, I have found that one dares not discuss one's deeply held opinions on controversial subjects openly or honestly, especially in some denominational settings. The very real danger is that one may be criticized or even condemned simply for thinking or verbalizing thoughts outside the approved boundaries and standards and policies which the majority wish to enforce. The result is that open, honest debate cannot happen, and new ideas dare not be shared.

The good news is that there is such a safe place! I have found again within the ABF a setting in which I can safely share myself and my ideas without fear of judgment or rejection. I have the opportunity to be wrong, to learn, to be stretched, to challenge, to explore, to face the really tough questions of faith and life; all without fear that I might be disciplined or shunned.

This freedom to speak freely in a safe place is a wonderful gift in a world where the shrill voices of religious extremism are intimidating into silence those who disagree.

So, if you are searching for true religious liberty, with the freedom to discuss real issues among friends who will love and accept you even when you disagree, then the ABF is the safe place you seek. The spirit is infectious, the fellowship refreshing, and the freedom to explore different opinions liberating.

And it will be made even better by your presence!



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www.AtlanticBaptistFellowship.CA



A New Name...

It didn't happen often, but it was always significant. Names were sometimes changed in Old Testament times to signify an event or circumstance which was noteworthy or historic. In Genesis 17:5, the Lord changes Abram [exalted father]; to Abraham [father of many], "for I have made you a father of many nations." And Jacob was renamed Israel, "because you have struggled with God and

with humans and have overcome.” Genesis 32:28 (NIV) Much later, Jesus changed Simon into Peter [Rock]. Matt. 16:18.

In this year, which is so significant in the life of the ABF, we must adopt a new name – not just because we are tired of the old one, but because we are unable to use our original name for incorporation; it was rejected by the registrar for several reasons.

A half year has now been spent in the search for a new name, with dozens being suggested at meetings, by email, and even with the help of our friends in other parts of Canada. From all of those suggestions, four names were selected by the Council, and submitted to the registrar for consideration. One name has received official approval, and is reserved for us – but only until June 12, 2012. The Council hereby recommends that the name of the Atlantic Baptist Fellowship be changed to

Canadian Association for Baptist Freedoms

Note that this expands our regional interest to all of Canada, and that it also retains the acronym ‘ABF’, with the addition of a ‘C’.

At our Annual Meeting last Fall, we voted unanimously to Incorporate, and to change our name. It was understood that the Council would bring a recommendation to our next meeting (Spring or Fall). All that remains now is to make the new name official. This will require a vote during the short Business Session which will be held at the Vincent Rushton Lecture on June 2.



And speaking of Incorporation...

Our legal expert, Gary Nelson, has all the documentation ready to be submitted to the registrar, under the Societies Act. This will be done immediately after the Rushton Lecture, presuming that we adopt the new name, and approve the required fee of \$ 40.01, which is all that Incorporation will cost us. Thanks to Gary, and all who have worked so hard on documentation, Constitution, By-Laws, Memorandum of Agreement, etc.

Working on credentials

Rev. Dr. Roger Prentice

With the possibility of incorporation, the ABF is seriously tackling the expectations that our churches should have of their clergy. A ‘Credentials Committee’ has been formed and is working diligently to set a proposal to the Council and ABF Assembly. The members of the committee are John Boyd and Roger Prentice (Chair), with the addition of our President, Dan Gibson.

Meeting regularly, the committee has discussed ‘grandfathering’ those who are already ordained and active in the ABF, and what would be appropriate expectations of new candidates for ordination. Discussion has included the granting of a congregational Licence to Preach, possible ABF Licence to Preach (as an Association of Baptist Churches), and the procedure for a congregation to apply to have a candidate examined and recommended for ordination. Two documents have been consulted: a Year Book of the Atlantic Baptist Convention, and the regulations of the American Alliance of Baptists. Nevertheless, we are determined to create our own special document, wrestling with what we, as the ABF, believe should be expected of an ordinand. One novel inclusion that has been discussed is a ‘Clergy Covenant’ which could be recited by both a new ordinand and those already accredited. So far, the three on the committee have been discussing thoroughly these and other ideas and have reported them to the Council. In due course the Committee will make a recommendation to the Council. After its examination of the details, and their own possible additions, it will be presented to the General Assembly for adoption.



**Rev. Dr. Roger Prentice is the retired
Chaplain of Acadia University**

Vincent Rushton Lectures 2012

Saturday, June 2 Manning Memorial Chapel Acadia University

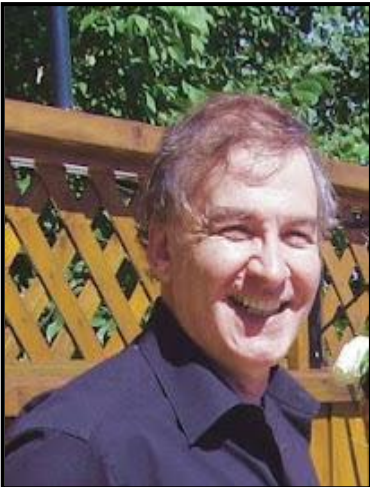
Our special speakers will be
Dr. Rita Deverell & Rev. Rex Deverell

11:00 Registration
11:30 Lecture (in the Chapel)
12:45 Luncheon
Tribute to Rev. Dr. I Judson Levy (Rev. John Boyd)
Brief Business Session

During the Luncheon, updates will be given by the Constitution Committee on the progress of our search for a new name and by the Credentials Committee.

To register for the luncheon, contact Kim Sweet.
ksweet2@ns.sympatico.ca
The cost is \$20, payable at registration.

Rev. Rex Deverell was born in Toronto on July 17, 1941, and was raised in Orillia, Ontario. In 1960 he moved to Hamilton to attend McMaster University and McMaster Divinity College, earning his Bachelor of Arts in 1963 and a Bachelor of Divinity in 1966. He attended Union Theological Seminary in New York City during 1966-67 and was granted a Master of Sacred Theology degree before serving as pastor at the Edward St. Baptist Church in St. Thomas, Ontario from 1967-1970.



Since 1970, Rex Deverell has worked as a playwright in Toronto and Regina, serving as resident playwright at the Globe Theatre in Regina, 1975-1989. He is the author of fifty stage plays and collective creations as well as numerous radio plays, and television and film scripts. His plays have premiered in Banff, Regina, Ottawa, Vancouver, Toronto, Hamilton, and Chester, New Jersey. Many toured Saskatchewan with the Globe Theatre School Tour. Several of his plays have been published including two anthologies: 'Deverell at the Globe' (NeWest Press, 1989), and 'Plays of Belonging' (Playwrights Canada Press, 1997).

Among several awards he has won, are the 1978 Canadian Authors Award for the play 'Boiler Room Suite' and the 1986 Major Armstrong Award for 'The Riel Commission'. His radio plays, dramatizations, and commentaries have appeared locally and nationally on CBC Radio, and he has recently begun to write opera libretti. He was a founding member and president of the Playwrights Union of Canada.

Dr. Rita Deverell's distinguished career has included work as



an academic, broadcaster, television producer/director, journalist, arts administrator and theatre artist. She holds a BA in Philosophy from Adelphi University, an MA in History of Religions from Columbia University and an EdD in Curriculum from OISE at the University of Toronto, and was the first woman to head a journalism program in Canada in her position as Director of the School of Journalism at the University of Regina in the 1980s. She completed

her term as head of news and current affairs at the Aboriginal People's Network in 2005 and is a founder of Vision TV, the world's first multifaith and multicultural network.

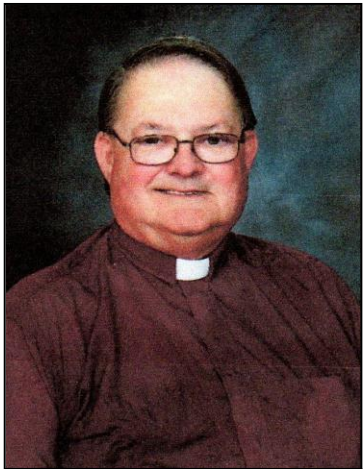
Recently Dr. Deverell has produced, directed, written, or acted in several theatre pieces and television dramas, as well as being an Editor and/or Contributor to three books. . She was recognized in 2005 with the Order of Canada for her pioneering work in journalism, with the CanWest Global Fellowship at the University of Western Ontario in 2007, and as Storyteller in Residence at Centennial College's Centre for Creative Communications in 2008.

Nancy's Chair in Women's Studies was established at Mount Saint Vincent University in the mid-1980s. Endowed by well-known Toronto-based feminist and philanthropist Nancy Ruth, the Chair raises awareness of women's issues by bringing to campus distinguished scholars in women's studies and activists who have contributed to the advancement of women. Dr. Deverell has brought her renowned skill and presence to Nancy's Chair from 2009 – 2012.



Into a Land of Anger
Rev John Tonks

Into a land of anger, hate, revenge, greed, lust, violence and above all despair, walks a man or woman. These persons carry within their soul a light which the darkness of this land cannot put out.



Rev. John Tonks is Vice President of the ABF

They come as agents of love and reconciliation in a land overflowing with hopelessness. On what distant shore is this land and who are these agents of reconciliation? It is found within the borders of Canada. It is wherever there is a jail or a prison which houses men and women who hate themselves. It is a place which is necessary and a place which is full of negativity.

The persons who come into this land bringing light to the darkness of hopelessness and despair are the prison chaplains. These men and women are people who can look beyond the wrong and see the potential in the other. They see the sin but also over the person in trouble is the shadow of the cross and glory of the empty tomb. The New Testament scholar Thomas Yoder Neufeld wrote:” Jesus extended mercy and forgiveness, neither of which sidestepped the issue of sin, of offence, of crime.”(Thomas R. Yoder Neufeld, “Forgiveness and the Dangerous Few: The Biblical Basis.” Address to the Christian Council for Reconciliation, Montreal, November 18, 1983, p.3)

All chaplains comes from their own life experience and personal religious experience which has been discovered in the context of the denomination to which they belong. When they enter this strange land of prison chaplaincy they face a new challenge. It can be a deep challenge of faith as they are called to minister to people of various church backgrounds or more commonly no church background and even people who come from a different faith. In their daily ministry they are called to not only be open to an ecumenical approach but a multi-faith approach. This for some has proven to be so difficult they have left the chaplaincy and returned to denominational ministry.

What makes the difference? In the context of working in a multi-faith and ecumenical ministry we need to confront our prejudices. From personal experience I have learned that being open to the other religious leaders who would visit the prison helped me move beyond my personal prejudices. As I entered into discussion with them and study of their religious perspective my respect and admiration grew. This freedom was grounded for me in the reality of my own faith journey. This journey began with a personal experience of the unconditional love and mercy of God in Christ. Because of this faith and a deep conviction that each person has the God given right to worship and express their faith according to their understanding, I can allow those with whom I work, the freedom to be who they are. Regardless of theology or belief we can work together for the common good.

The second difference is similar. It is to remember that this ministry as is any ministry is not mine to own. It is God's! I am simply the instrument through which he works if I allow him. A number of years ago in a group the following poem/prayer was read.

***Father, I have failed you, failed society
and failed myself.***

***I am serving life for murder in this institution,
but you know that already
for you know me.***

***I ask your forgiveness as I do
in this dark room every night.***

I have come to know you during my incarceration.

***Father, in my talks with you,
I've made no commitment.
But I feel I must do this now.
In the darkness of this prison cell,
I repeat the words of Jesus. Your Son.
"Into thy hands I commit my spirit."***

Charlie Taylor goes on to write this about the discussion which followed. "It was recalled that it had been written when this prisoner was alone at night in his cell. There were certainly no chaplains around at that hour. Nor was there any supportive Christian Community about him. But the Spirit of God was present. Surely, "the wind bloweth where it listeth" (John3:8) As chaplains reflected they began to put their ministry into perspective. After all, it was Christ's ministry" (Charles Taylor, "That They May Have Life: A Ministry With Prisoners" p.15, 16) All ministry is Gods we are the vessel which carry His love and mercy to a desperate land.

After over 20 years of working in an ecumenical and multi-faith ministry I feel blessed beyond measure. Although some within my denomination have said I am now tainted because of this experience I believe that the God whom I worship and follow was directly involved with me in this journey.

"Hola!" from Cuba

Rev. Dave Ogilvie

While vacationing in Cuba in February, it was again my privilege to make contact with our sisters and brothers in the Fraternity of Cuban Baptist Churches, who send their greetings to the members of ABF, along with expressions of gratitude for the recent donation of funds we sent to help them in their ministry. I worshipped in First Baptist Church Matanzas on Sunday morning where I brought greetings from our congregation in Port Williams and was presented with a candle to carry back to Canada the light of Christ as it shines in the lives of Cuban Baptists. It was indeed a



thoughtful and meaningful gift. I, along with Carol and Ron Buckley from Port Williams, shared lunch with the pastor and his wife - Orestes and Wanda [left] - who have visited twice with us in Nova Scotia, and who have become good friends.

Those of you who attended the ABF Fall Assembly we hosted in Port Williams in 2010 will remember meeting Dr. Francisco (Paco) Rodés and his wife, Lila. Paco was out of the country while I was there, but Lila joined us for the day and accompanied us when we visited the Baptist Church in Oliva, a congregation with which



we partner. It was wonderful to see so many familiar faces and to share a celebration in the home of their pastor, Josué and his wife, Danely [above, with Ron and Carol Buckley]- a newly-constructed

parsonage [right] that was built with money supplied by our congregation in Port Williams and labour provided by a large cross-section of people from the Baptist churches in Oliva and Sabanilla.



The Fraternity of Cuban Baptist Churches continues to participate in several ecumenical endeavors, principal among them lately, the training of prison chaplains - a ministry envisioned and initiated by Paco. On June 16, 2011, a



The children of Oliva Baptist Church

total of 87 pastors and lay leaders made up the first graduating class of prison chaplains in Cuba. Co-sponsored by the Ecumenical Council of Churches in Cuba and the Ecumenical Seminary in Matanzas, the graduation took place at the Quaker Center in Gibara, on Cuba's

northeast coast. These graduates come from 26 different denominational backgrounds, from Pentecostals to 'mainstream' Protestants, including a few Roman Catholics.

"Few of these chaplains receive economic support for this work," said Paco, who now serves as the Cuban Council of Churches' national coordinator for prison ministry. "Only about a third are formally ordained. These humble servants of Christ - both men

and women [about 25% of the graduates are women], including some former prisoners - were eager to have this training, along with the opportunity to get to know others doing the same work."

Each of the graduates completed 60 hours of training over eight months, held in four major cities in Eastern Cuba. The training team consisted of Paco, Rev. Mark Siler, a prison chaplain from



North Carolina, and Lazaro Ceballo [left], a Cuban church musician. Training topics included conflict transformation and restorative justice, spiritual formation, Bible study and pastoral counseling. A variety of other specialists,

including psychologists, lawyers, former inmates and other pastoral counselors, assisted with the training. This interdisciplinary approach - enlivened by music led by Ceballo - was designed to connect chaplains with other resources in their own communities.



Cuban Baptists have much to teach us, and they welcome our partnership in person and in prayer. For more information about how you and your church can get involved, please drop me a line at dave.pwubc@ns.aliantzinc.ca.

Rev. Dave Ogilvie, Port Williams
United Baptist Church.

***41st Annual Meeting
Atlantic Baptist Fellowship
(or
Canadian Association for Baptist Freedoms)***

**Friday, October 19 (supper, evening),
and Saturday, October 20 (morning, lunch,
and maybe a short time in the afternoon)**

Wolfville Baptist Church

Theme Speaker:



Rev. Dr. J. Brent Walker
Executive Director of the
Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty
Washington, DC
<http://www.bjcpc.org/>

Rev. Dr. J. Brent Walker, Executive Director of the Baptist Joint Committee, is both a member of the Supreme Court Bar and an ordained minister. A native of Charleston, W.Va., Walker earned B.A. and M.A. degrees from the University of Florida and holds a J.D. degree from Stetson University College of Law.

Brent was a partner in the law firm of Carlton, Fields, in Tampa, Fla. He left the firm in 1986 to enter Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky., where he earned a Master of Divinity degree in 1989 and was named the most outstanding graduate. He pastored the Richland Baptist Church, Falmouth, Ky., and routinely speaks in churches and denominational gatherings. Having taught 10 years as an adjunct professor of law at Georgetown University Law Center, he has, since 2003, served as an adjunct professor at the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond.

Walker has been published widely and routinely provides commentary on church-state issues in the national media. He has appeared on Hardball with Chris Matthews on MSNBC, MacNeil/Lehrer, CNN Talk Back Live, NBC Today Show, Fox News (O'Reilly Factor), National Public Radio "All Things Considered" and "Morning Edition", he is frequently quoted in numerous newspapers, including the Washington Post, New York Times, Boston Globe, Atlanta Constitution, Tampa Tribune.

His wife, Nancy, is pastor for congregational care at Columbia Baptist Church in Falls Church, Va. They have two children. Ryan is a singer/songwriter, and Layton is a teacher in Falls Church. Layton and her husband, Lucas, are the parents of the Walker's first grandchild.

His publications include: Stetson Law Review, Florida Bar Journal, Florida Civil Practice Before Trial, Basic Construction Disputes, Liberty Magazine, Pulpit Digest, Doran's Ministers Manual, Proclaiming the Baptist Vision: Religious Liberty, Religious Liberty and Church-State Separation. Edited: The Trophy of Baptists, James Dunn: Champion for Religious Liberty.

ABF Membership

1. This is an application for:

Individual Membership

Church Membership (requires church motion)

2. Individual's name: _____
or

3. Church's name: _____

4. Mailing address for the Individual or for the Church:

5. Contact name for Church membership:

6. Email address for the Individual or for the Church:

7. Telephone # for the Individual or for the Church:

This form can be used for either membership – Individual Membership and Church Membership. It is **important** that churches who were not represented at the 2011 Annual General Meeting (held October 1, 2011) advise that they wish to retain their membership with ABF.

Fees: Individual \$10 annually;
 Church: An annual donation

Send your completed membership to

Attention: Rev. David Ogilvie
c/o Port Williams United Baptist Church
P.O. Box 301

Port Williams, Nova Scotia B0P 1T0

Or send your completed form to: abf@ns.sympatico.ca