

The Bulletin

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



‘By me kings reign, and princes decree justice.’ Proverbs 8: 15 (AV)

In honour of Her Majesty’s 90th birthday, 21 April 2016

Detail: Wolfville Baptist Church

SPRING 2016

Editorial: Recognizing the Saints

On another page of this issue the reader will find a photo of the induction of a *deacon emerita* in one of our congregations. This is a well-deserved and honourable designation, especially for the person involved. She has been a pillar of the church's ministry and spiritual development. But it is also an excellent jog to our collective memory.

How often do our congregations not just mark someone's extra dedication to Christ and His Church, but in doing so bestow a significant office on them? A number of our churches indeed have designated a beloved retiring member of the clergy as 'Minister Emeritus' but there are so many of our congregations who have assisted the ministry in profound ways, some humble and some spectacularly obvious, and are practically taken for granted or even ignored..

Remembering that the office of an acting deacon is one of the two orders of ministry that Baptists have recognized, we honour this type of servant ministry as a special individual. Deacons, acting and honorary, assisting the Minister at The Table, perhaps is the most visible sign of their work, but it is only the tip of the iceberg. Deacons assist in visiting, praying, organizing meetings, raising money and care for the administration of the congregation's resources, especially human resources.

When we honour one who has had a life committed, for some years, to these things, it is a high accolade indeed. The Bible uses the term 'saint' to refer to a faithful member of the Christian community. The OED also offers this reflection on the word: 'a very holy person; a very good and long-suffering person.' Those deacons we choose to honour undoubtedly would never consider themselves so worthy, but the Church today needs people so named for their merits to be witnesses (the root of this word is 'martyr') to the work of Christ and the ministry of the contemporary Body of Christ. It is real, it is active, and it is a vital proclamation of the Gospel.

Roger H. Prentice—Editor

The colour cover was donated by a friend of CABF.

Beyond the Sacred Page: *Bible Study in the Modern Age*

The Rev'd Bert Radford



*The Rev'd Bert
Radford*

Bible study is an hybrid, a blending of study and devotion, speaking to the mind and the heart. It is my perception that people who come to Bible study want to learn about and understand the book, but more than that, they want to be moved by it, touched by it. They want it to speak to their hearts.

People want to experience ideas, truth that touch their souls and they tend not to be satisfied with a critical dissection of the sources and the text no matter how learned.

To study the scriptures, however, with no thought for the origins, translation, complexity or original settings seems dishonest. Many a pastor, schooled in the textual criticism and responsible scholarship of mid-twentieth century theological education has been heartbroken to see that many church people are not interested in the sources of Genesis, the authorship of Isaiah, or the meaning of the original Greek. They come to Bible study seeking a thought to carry them through the day.

Here are questions to ponder: Are we intellectually dishonest when we use what scholars dismiss as spurious or dubious texts to teach an important and meaningful idea? Does our perception of the Word depend on our understanding fully the context in which a passage was written? Was the inspiration of the scriptures a purely individual experience or were the several centuries of the churches' reading, re-writing and translating the scriptures part of the inspiration of the text?

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.

I believe the Bible is a gift of God to people of all centuries, given through prophet, priest, poet, historian, politician and preacher, all embroiled in the difficult business of living out faith in ambiguous and often hostile times. I believe that the Bible is the gift of the Church, whose inspired struggles with the contingencies of time and place gave us a record of God's work within and among the people of God. I believe the Bible, when studied with open minds and hearts can unlock for us the inspiration that gave birth and nurtured the fledgling church.

A friend of mine, at his ordination, was asked for his doctrinal understanding of the Bible. He chuckled in the pleasant way he has, and said the Bible was like a gold mine in which you dig around and extract nuggets when you find them. That chance comment has informed my understanding of the Bible and how it works among church people throughout my ministry.

I believe that the Bible is the inspired Word, that it can speak to the hearts and minds of needful humans and that it offers the record of God's compassionate relationships with the often sinful people of this planet. I believe it is a gold mine of poetic vision, inspiring history, dramatic stories and, above all, the "Old, old story of Jesus and His love". I believe that if people are led to study it with a basic understanding of its origins and complexity and with openness to its sometimes hidden and subtle meanings, that the Bible can inspire, motivate, comfort and heal needy people.

Mary Lathbury's hymn provides us with a prayer to begin Bible study, which, I think, catches its essence.

Break Thou the bread of life, Dear Lord to me,
As Thou didst break the loaves beside the sea;
Beyond the sacred page I seek Thee Lord;
My spirit longs for Thee, O Living Word.

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

Reflections on a Pastoral Ministry in Rural Nova Scotia

Richard Manuel



Lic. Rick Manuel

Following a career in Nova Scotia's public service, my wife and I moved to the Hants Shore of the province in 2010 and a few years later I began a course of part-time studies in lay pastoral leadership (Lay Pastor Training Program, Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches). Following a one-year interim pastoral ministry assignment, I recently accepted a call from the members of the Newport Baptist Church in Scotch Village to serve as their pastor on a part-time basis (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/newportbaptistchurch/>).

Following several decades of gospel ministry in the area, Newport Baptist Church was established in 1799 under the pastoral leadership of Shubael Dimock and his sons. They had moved to the area from Connecticut with others of the New England Planters who were taking up farming on the lands previously occupied by Acadian settlers who had been expelled by the British approximately 45 years earlier (Source: *Historical Sketch of Newport Baptist Church of Scotch Village* by Dr. William Brackney, a former pastor).

Over the more than 200 years of her history, Newport Baptist Church has experienced times of rapid growth and periods of decline. Following one of these unfortunate periods in the 1940s, the Church began to rebuild and experienced growth and vitality as a congregation from the 1950s to the early part of this century when, like many other churches, her membership and congregational participation began to decline once again.

There are now approximately 18 to 25 adults in regular attendance at Sunday worship services and a few pre-school aged children. However, there are no pre-teen, teenage or young adults remaining in the



*Newport Baptist Church,
Scotch Village, NS*

church community. The majority of members in regular Sunday worship attendance are seniors who, almost without exception, are related to one or more of the two or three leading families in the Church and community. Newport Baptist Church characterizes itself as a “family church” and the membership and fellowship reflect that profile.

Musical and fellowship events hosted by the Church variously include summertime gospel jamborees hosted in the Church’s gazebo, men’s

fellowship breakfasts and seniors suppers, Hants Baptist Fellowship gospel music concerts, and other music-centred events or “sing-ins” from time to time. Family connectedness, country gospel music, and food-centred fellowship have, over the years, emerged as the Church’s leading strengths and offerings to its members and many friends in the community and beyond.

Newport Baptist Church has learned to adapt to its shrinking membership base by co-operating and collaborating with other congregations in the area along both denominational and inter-denominational lines. This practice has been proven enjoyable, enriching, and strengthening for each of the many participating congregations in the West Hants County area.

Providing pastoral leadership in this context is both a challenge and a blessing:

A challenge... in that concern for the Church’s ongoing viability as a free-standing congregation in the long-established

community is a key, though usually unspoken, consideration in discussions of ministry emphasis and future direction;

A blessing... because the people of Newport Baptist Church, both the seniors and young adults, are fully invested in the ministries of the Church and are ready and able to apply their knowledge, skills, talents, and service orientation to support the work of their Church home in this corner of the Kingdom of God.

For me as their pastor, well into the second half of my life and being relatively new in both my calling and my setting, the learning curve is steep! But having been mentored for the journey by such pastoral mavens as the late Rev. Dr. Keith Churchill, and being well supported by a group of dedicated deacons, I feel well prepared and supported for the challenge to which I feel called by our Lord. Please continue to hold me and the people of Newport Baptist Church in your prayers. Our morning services are at 11 a.m. and all are welcome on "any given Sunday."

Lic. Rick Manuel is the minister of the Newport Baptist Church, Scotch Village, Hants Co., NS.

Intentional Interim Ministry

by Rev. John E. Boyd

Part I: What is It and Why Choose It?

Intentional Interim Ministry is a growing specialty among clergy for Churches of all denominations facing pastoral transitions. Whereas prevailing wisdom has been that the period between the loss of one minister and the calling of another should be as brief as possible, contemporary research and practice has shown that a longer transition period could be beneficial.



*The Rev'd John E.
Boyd*

Churches can now choose a specially trained leader for one to two years during which agreed upon goals can be met through intentional processes that make the "in between" time exciting and productive.

Intentional Interim Ministry is all about dealing with change. Rev'd. Dr. B. Leslie Robinson, Jr. of the Center for Congregational Health in Winston-Salem, NC, speaks of the period between ministers as a time of **change, transition and transformation.**

Change can be defined as the inevitable movement of life's forces. 'Inevitable' means it is going to happen, and 'movement' means we will become different (From "What is Interim Ministry?" an article by Rev'd. Dr. B. Leslie Robinson, Jr. available at <http://fbchalifax.ca/transition/what-is-interim-ministry>). Change comes to a congregation when a minister resigns, retires, is fired or dies, and the forces unleashed will play out one way or another. As Robinson puts it, "We can chose to resist it or fight it or be angry about it or even deny it, but change is going to occur; we are going to become different as life progresses." (Robinson)

Transition is the process by which individuals and congregations deal with change.(Robinson) People often fear transition more than the original change. When a minister leaves, a congregation is thrown into a time of grief for what has been lost, confusion about who will lead and how they will function, and uncertainty about the long term future. It is vital that congregations take the time to think and pray together about what things will stop, what will continue and what new things will be written in the latest chapter of its story of faith and faithfulness.

Transformation is the new shape that grows out of this time of transition. (Robinson) Yes, things will be different from what they were, but how exciting to dream of the possibilities! As a congregation focusses on its challenges, opportunities, resources, spiritual gifts and community context, aided by an experienced transitional leader, a vision for the future takes shape, along with a clearer picture of the kind of spiritual leader needed for the next stage of the journey.

Why should a Church seek an Intentional Interim Minister?

If a Church has even one of the following situations an Intentional Interim Minister could help it deal with its challenges and prepare the ground for a suc-



cessful ministry to follow: following a long pastorate (over 10 years); when a pastorate comes to a difficult end (especially if moral failure or abuse is involved); when an antiquated system of governance is in the way; where chronic financial issues (or irregularities) exist; where deferred maintenance has led to a building that is a huge burden; where volunteers have done nothing of significance for a number of years; where significant change in the congregation or neighbourhood has occurred; where there are intractable divisions in the congregation; when merger with another congregation is being considered or forced.

As with all living organisms, a congregation must constantly deal with change, in itself and in its context, or else it dies. During pastoral transitions it is essential to discover the possibilities for transformation and new life, a process a trained Intentional Interim Minister may be called to lead.

This is the first of a four-part series on Intentional Interim Ministry. The Rev'd John Boyd retired from First Baptist Church Halifax a year ago and continues to live in Halifax with his wife, Debbie.

The Reflector *and its Story*



THE REFLECTOR *Vol. I, No. 1*

Many congregations have or have had a church newspaper where current news and announcements are publicized. This is a 'story' that is told by one. In 1897, the Amherst Baptist Church (as it was known then), under the leadership of their new minister, John Howard MacDonald, adopted the idea of a paper for themselves. It would be known as *The Reflector*. Two early editions exist in the Acadia University archives: the first edition (March 1897) and Vol. II, No. 5 (November 1899). As it happens, the second was the first issued after the MacDonalds

leaving Amherst to be Principal of the Acadia Ladies' Seminary.

MacDonald had been the Assistant Minister to Dr. David Allan Steele for a year (1892-1893) before going off to Newton Theological Institute. When Dr. Steele retired in 1896 it was MacDonald who was recalled to succeed him. It did not take long for MacDonald to make his youthful mark. One of his first was the establishment of *The Reflector*.

It is a notorious truth that after a long and successful pastorate, a congregation may feel ready for 'a change' but, in reality, fears any disruption to their usual routine. MacDonald was only 33 when he assumed the pastorate, married



Rev'd Dr. J. H. MacDonald (courtesy of Acadia Archives and Special Collections)

for only five years and with a four-year old son. His young family and new position contributed to the circumstances of ‘the hidden story’ in the newspaper. Change of meeting days and times, adjustments to the new building, request for a new parsonage, a new manner of preaching all hallmarked MacDonald’s energetic leadership. He may have moved too quickly. We do know that MacDonald was extremely intelligent, most spiritual in his faith and expression, and very efficient in his administration. *The Reflector* would demonstrate this.

In 1899, three years into MacDonald’s ministry, the Acadia Board of Governors sought MacDonald as Principal of their Ladies’ Seminary. He quickly accepted. Why such a short ministry for such a respected clergyman?

The Amherst Church Book record of 26 June 1899 might say more than intended:

The resignation of our Pastor Bro. MacDonald which he read to us on Sunday June 18 was next taken into consideration, & it was moved by Bro. Wm Read & Geo Christie that under the circumstances this church, then, with deep regrets accepts its pastors [sic] resignation believing that he has been called to a position for which he is eminently fitted. And [sic] which will give him a chance to enlarge his influence for good. Some suggestions were made in re[gard] of the calling of another man as pastor that matters might be kept as quiet as possible.



These words might open a door to understanding the subsequent *Reflector*. The tone of, ‘which he read to us’, ‘under the

Amherst Baptist Church, c. 1896 (courtesy of Acadia Archive and Special Collections)

circumstances,' 'a chance to enlarge his influence,' and 'that matters might be kept as quiet as possible' could indicate that it was not an unmitigated disappointment that MacDonald resigned.

The November 1899 *Reflector* might give some hints. The first page article headlines, 'Service of Recognition to Rev. W. E. Bates, B.A.' The first hint might emerge from Deacon George W. Christie's lengthy public welcome. He said, 'The pastoral relationship is one that demands the utmost confidence on the part of each of the contracting parties. Without this no successful work can be accomplished, no lasting results realized.' A BYPU article praised 'our new minister' as one 'who comes to our meetings with new phases of the evening's topic'.

The *pièce de résistance* may be 'Introductory Words' by Bates himself. Perhaps he was listening to his Amherst lay leaders. He wrote, 'We know we shall be very happy among you and soon be entirely at home with you. Let me say just here the "latch string" of our house and of our heart is out.' If they missed the point, he continues, 'Let me request ... that you be social and informal with your Pastor and family; run in often and come as to a **brother** and **sister** [his emphasis] for such we want to be to everyone of you.'

MacDonald might have been more preoccupied with his young family to offer such generous invitations. He may have been too quick to make changes. He might have seemed a little 'aloof' for his congregation. Likely he was respected but not loved. Nevertheless, he would go on to greater glory.

For someone interested in history, these two little church newspapers might reveal much of the unsaid inner thoughts and workings of the congregation. In our 'electronic age' much of this type of information likely will be lost with the push of a 'Delete' button.

Church records may be sent for preservation to The Acadia University Archives, c/o Pat Townsend.

Information Corner:

Davis Csinos has been appointed to teach full-time at the Atlantic School of Theology in Halifax beginning June 2016.

The Rev'd Byron Corkum, Minister of First Baptist Church, Amherst, has announced his retirement to begin 1 September 2017.

The Wolfville Area Inter-Church Council is sponsoring two Syrian refugee families and the Port Williams United Baptist Church is sponsoring another family.

First Baptist Church, Amherst, is a partner with other community organizations and churches sponsoring four refugee families into their town.

A second Ontario Baptist congregation has opened discussions about becoming a member church of the CABF. First Baptist, Brantford, will be received as a member at the CABF June meeting.

A third booklet, *The Cardinal*, in the Acadia Centre of Baptist and Anabaptist Studies series on the life of Rev'd Dr. John Howard MacDonald was released in April and is available for \$10.00 from the Editor of The Bulletin.

The Rev'd Neil Price, Minister Emeritus of Wolfville Baptist Church, celebrated his 100th birthday this past March. Both Acadia University and Wolfville Baptist marked the joyful occasion with special events.

Dr. Pauline Allsop was inducted at First Baptist Church Halifax as *Deacon Emerita*.

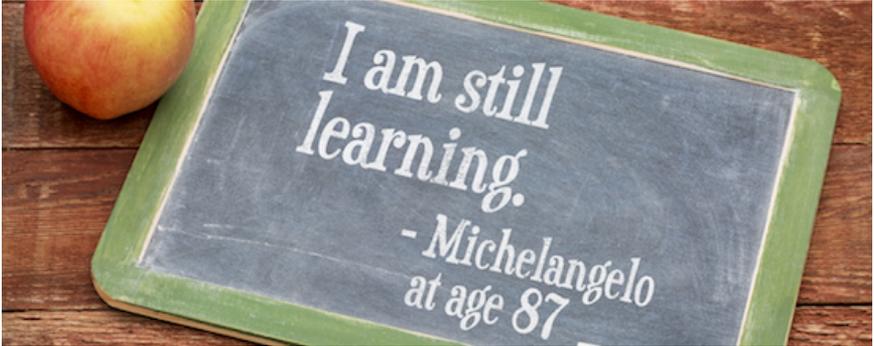
(l-r) Dr. Pauline Allsop, Mr. James Stanley, chair of the Board of Deacons. (Photo courtesy of Mr. Warren Hoeg)





**Canadian Association
for Baptist Freedoms**

Vin Rushton Lecture & Luncheon



"Searching for Faithful Adult Learning"

Guest Lecturer: Ed Colquhoun

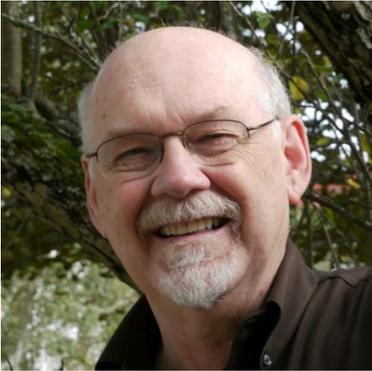
Saturday, June 4, 2016

Port Williams United Baptist Church
Port Williams, Nova Scotia

Registration: 10:00 a.m. Lecture: 10:30 a.m. Luncheon: 12:00 noon
Cost: \$25.00 (includes lecture and luncheon)

PLEASE register in advance by contacting:

Kim Sweet
25 Ports Landing, P.O. Box 528
Port Williams, NS B0P 1T0
902-542-1261 kjsweet@live.ca



Ed Colquhoun

After studying English, Theology, and Counselling at Acadia University, and training for the ministry, Ed Colquhoun followed his calling as a public school administrator, mostly in Amherst, Nova Scotia, where he was a school principal for twenty-two years. His initial degrees have been supplemented with a postgraduate diploma in Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Alberta and the equivalent of several years of study in a variety of disciplines at Mount Allison University (spit now, Corner Gas fans) at which he remains a “special student.”

Ed has been a member of the CABF (or ABF) from its inception, serving as a member of Council, President, and Editor of the Bulletin. Since his retirement from school administration, Ed’s conducting an occasional adult class at First Baptist Church, Amherst, has morphed into a regular avocation. He also has conducted adult learning at First Baptist Halifax and for the Tantramar Seniors’ College.

Ed’s wife Susan and two children, Scott and Heather, have all studied at Acadia. His volunteer board work has included chairing the local hospital board, membership on the Acadia Board of Governors, the Acadia Divinity College Board of Trustees, as well as the national VON Board and the provincial Nova Scotia Hearing and Speech Centres Board.

For the Rushton Lecture, he is reflecting upon his experiences with adult learning in the Church under the title – *Searching for Faithful Adult Learning*.

Please join us if you can!

Believers' Church Conference

Acadia University and
Acadia Divinity College
22-25 June 2016

The Tendency Towards Separation

The Acadia Centre for Baptist and Anabaptist Studies (ACBAS) has extended an international invitation to those interested in the Believers' Church movement in history to hear Eileen Barker, OBE, FBA, Professor Emeritus of the London School of Economics to deliver a Keynote Address 'The Curse of Cults and the Scourge of Sects? Or a Come-Outing of New Religious Movements?'. This is the seventeenth Believers' Church conference.

Other speakers include William H. Brackney, defining the 'Come-Outer' Impulse and the Baptists as a case study; Martin Rothkegel, 'The Making of New Churches in Western Christianity, 1400 – 1600; Karen Smith, 'The Response of some British Baptist Women to the Call to "come out" from the World'; Douglas Foster, 'From Unifiers to Come Outers: the Stone-Campbell Restoration movement'; David E. Goatley, 'Separation as a Strategy among African-American Baptists'; John Roth, 'Without Spot or Wrinkle: Discipline, Separation and Authority in the Mennonite Tradition'; Allison MacGregor, 'Promiscuous Picnics: Newfoundland Pentecostalism as a Come-Outer Tradition; and Henry Worz, 'Hutterite History, Faith and Culture'.

Full conference fee is \$125; bus tour \$20

Day fee (Wed., Thurs., Sat.) is \$40.

The Friday day fee is \$55, which includes the
conference banquet and keynote speaker.

Registration: acbas.acadiau.ca

For a brochure, call 1-506-476-4211

