

The Bulletin

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



ANITA FRALEY FLOWERS, CHRISTIANNE RUSHTON,
AND THE REV'D DR. DON FLOWERS
THE PORT WILLIAMS UNITED BAPTIST CHURCH

SPRING 2018

Editorial: Religion and Sport

My favourite closing of a day is to Google ‘The Church’s One Foundation’ and to play the Westminster Abbey U Tube recording of the processional hymn that took place 17 September 2010. Watching it, one can suddenly appreciate why young people are attracted to such pageantry. ‘Pageantry’ is not an empty gesture but acting out of an experience and belief. We see this in sport, both amateur and professional. There are entrance rituals and game regulations and decorum.

It might be questioned why this is disappearing from many of our churches. Is it a mistake to assume that the only way to attract young people—and older people, too—is to make our services less formal? It is an understandable attempt to make people feel ‘comfortable’ in church, but is that what people subconsciously desire? Is not being on the edge of mystery part of it, too? Last year at a Christmas festival, one church made its service more like a talent show, and it was half filled. Down the road, a little rural church, for the same occasion, conducted a formal service and it was packed to ‘standing room only’.

We might rediscover the meaning of understandable ritual that expresses the mystery of our faith and discipleship. Watching the procession making its way down the centre aisle of Westminster Abbey is thrilling to watch. Yes, it was a special occasion, but it attracted several thousand, displayed the excitement of coming to worship Christ, which it was meant to do. Baptist churches would not feel comfortable in trying to imitate this but becoming more informal may not be as attractive as one might first guess.

Watching the Olympics and we see the rituals. They are meaningful to the participants and to the people who attend. Watch our services on Sunday mornings and see if we might be able to represent the Christian faith and devotion to Christ with the same signification.

Roger H. Prentice—Editor

Such is the Task: Interim Ministry

The Rev'd Bert Radford

May I be allowed an old and tired minister's joke? The new Interim Minister was presiding at his first worship service in an interim role and explained that as his predecessor was such a distinguished minister he felt like a piece of cardboard tacked over an open window. An enthusiastic parishioner at the door leaving worship gushed, "Sir, you underestimate yourself. You are not a piece of cardboard, you are a real pane". It is the lot of interim ministers to relive, with the congregation, what was good, and what was not so good about the past clergy. That is part of the ministry. It is often difficult to listen with not even one judgmental tut or tisk whether your church is lamenting a failed ministry or grieving the loss of an effective one. It is difficult not to take the side of someone who is venting about impropriety or incompetence of a minister. It is also difficult not to take offence as a parishioner extols the virtues of the previous preacher and has no good word for your efforts. Such is the task of Interim Ministry.

In many denominations the Interim works under several restrictions. She, or he, is not to initiate new programs, radically change the nature of worship, or lead in the establishment of long-term goals for the church. The word "caretaker" is often used to describe this role. These limitations can be frustrating, particularly for a minister who has strong opinions about the direction the church should go and is eager to lead in the



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.

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The colour cover was donated by a friend of CABF.

revitalization and growth of the church. One will have a well-bitten tongue before the term is finished. Such is the task of the Interim.

There is a creative side to a short-term assignment that fills the gap between ministries. If there is division and pain in the church for any reason the Interim can bring healing and health by listening, judging neither side and gently bringing people together in a trusting, accepting environment. Interims are often retired pastors putting their hand to the plough again, and the experiences they have had in their various churches serve them well in difficult situations. As Tennyson wrote in *Ulysses*, "Old age hath yet his honour and his toil; ... some work of noble note, may yet be done." Such is the task of the Interim.

An Interim Minister can find many personal rewards in the work. How good it is to stand again in a pulpit, to lead once more in the familiar liturgies, to let the experience of many sermons free you from total dependence on your prepared text and to feel free to trust the well-stream of ideas that God has given you over many years. Of course, there is danger in the unplanned word. Perhaps, as the mind becomes less agile, reliance on prepared text is only prudent. One must sense the limitations and weaknesses of age and make peace with them. Such is the task of the Interim.

I have felt a sense of urgency driving my preaching as I grow older and the time available continues to shrink. That very urgency gives heightened meaning to continued service. I have served in Interim Ministries in a score of churches in several denominations and each time I "retire" I say to myself, "Well Bert, I guess that will be the last". As I write I am thinking of my Easter sermon, for, despite my prophecies that the end is nigh, I continue to serve. I know that the time will come when either the requests will stop coming or I will have to decline. To accept gracefully that Interim Ministry has come to an end will be most difficult. Such is the task of the Interim.

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

Trust To Sharing Their Story: The unique role of a Mental Health Chaplain

Captain (Padre) Ian Easter

I will never forget the first time someone opened up and shared their life with me. I was a student leader at Trinity Western University and a new student asked if he could talk to me about some personal struggles that he was dealing with alone but felt he could safely share with me. I remember the feeling of privilege and honour I felt as I sat with this young man and simply listened as he unpacked what seemed to be a lifetime of pain. It wasn't overwhelming to hear another person's struggles. I didn't feel the need to give him advice or suggestions for how he could improve his circumstances. I didn't even offer to pray with him as it didn't feel appropriate at the time. I just sat with him and listened to his story, allowing him to openly share his pain in the presence of another trusted person, affirming his personal value while empathizing with his struggles and in the end I thanked him for the courage of sharing his journey with me.



As I reflect on this experience I realise that little has changed in my experience as a Mental Health Chaplain in the Canadian Forces. Despite years of counselling ministry as a pastor, missionary and chaplain or two Masters degrees and countless similar encounters with people asking the familiar question, "Can I talk to you about something?" I realise that I am still doing the same thing today that I did all those years before. I may have gained more education, experience and technical competence in counselling but in the end I am left with the profound honour and privilege of having someone share their story with me. I understand now that my call to ministry is deeply connected to the sacred journey of walking alongside another person as they share their own story.

In essence, the work I do as a Mental Health Chaplain is a continuation of that first encounter at Trinity Western, it's just that now I am working with a population of people who serve our country and wear the uniform of the Canadian Armed Forces and who have struggles and pain from their service that few of us have ever experienced in our lives outside the military. These are largely people who would never darken the door of a church "for fear of being struck by lightning" (as I am frequently told in jest) and who have very little use for organized religion let alone a priest, pastor or "padre" (as chaplains are called in the CAF). Yet my role is much the same as it was when I was in the church: I sit, I listen, I affirm, I care and by allowing this person to share their story we can try to put together the pieces of their life. This is the sacred work to which I am honored to be a part.

Mental Health Chaplains are a fairly recent addition to the Canadian Forces Health Services team of Mental Health professionals, among whom are psychiatrists, psychologists, Social Workers, Addictions Counsellors and Mental Health Nurses. All of these clinicians are exceptional in their own disciplines and provide exceptional care and support to military members. Yet the Mental Health Chaplains are unique because of our ability to engage in psycho-spiritual counselling which explores a member's beliefs, values, faith and understanding of spirituality as well as psychological matters. As I frequently remind my professional colleagues when we meet to discuss cases, "I bring God back into the room". Although this is meant to be humorous, there is some truth and increasingly recognized value of having a chaplain who can weave spirituality into the practice of psychotherapy and so there is a significant role or "place at the table" for a Mental Health Chaplain.

As I reflect back on that first experience at TWU of having someone trust me enough to share their story with me, I realise that I continue to walk out the honour and privilege of sharing this sacred ministry in my role as a Mental Health Chaplain in Victoria.

Captain Ian Easter is a Mental Health Chaplain in the Canadian Armed Forces and is stationed at Victoria, BC and is an accredited minister of the CABF. His church membership is with First Baptist Church Halifax.

Port Williams Welcomes Minister

By Dr. John Churchill

On January 2, 2018 the Port Williams United Baptist Church welcomed its new minister, the Rev. Dr. Don Flowers and his wife Anita Fraley Flowers. Prior to accepting the call to the Port Williams church, Don had been the pastor of Providence Baptist Church on Daniel Island, South Carolina (outside Charleston) since 1997. Previously, he was the Minister of Youth and Activities at First Baptist Church, Greenville, SC. He received his BA in Religion from Wake Forest University in 1980, a Master of Divinity from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1985 and a Doctor of Ministry from Candler School of Theology, Emory University, in 2000. While a student at Emory, he focused his work on sexual ethics for parents, which ultimately was the topic of his dissertation.

In the past, Don served on the Coordinating Council of the SC Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. In Greenville, Don became involved in the SC Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy and in Charleston, he was an organizing member and the first chair of their board. On his leaving, he was made an emeritus board member. Don delights in the friendships he made on the board and the significant impact the organization had in lowering the number of teenage pregnancies in the state.

Don and Anita, are the parents of two grown daughters, who with husbands, live in Nashville, Tennessee, and Austin Texas. Don enjoys golf, biking, being in, near, or on the water, and is passionate about NSCAR and the “Demon Deacons” of Wake Forest.

The Port Williams Search Committee appreciated, in particular, Don’s scholarly approach to ministry and preaching, strong Baptist identity, leadership skills, quality of relationships, and commitment to service. The Port Williams church resonated with the values and identity of Providence Baptist Church, an inclusive congregation comprised of many faith backgrounds, who affirm historic Baptist freedoms.

Don counts as friends many in Baptist circles who are known to us in the CABF, including Dr. Bill Leonard and others who provided

“references.” One of the highlights of Don’s year is “Preaching Camp” attended by five other close associates who have been gathering for the past 14 years to prepare for the coming liturgical year using the Common Lectionary as a basis.

Don and Anita approach the move north with a desire to learn the nuances of Canadian life and a sense of adventure to be part and contribute to Canadian Baptist life. Don says he is very interested in understanding how one’s culture context forms the way one understands the gospel. For a take on how Don and Anita see life and their new surroundings check out Don’s blog at <https://didntmakethesermon.wordpress.com/> and Anita’s at <https://www.ordinarywandering.com/>



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A Memorable Musical Weekend

by Susan Colquhoun

The level of anticipation and excitement within me was rising rapidly! It was Saturday morning, the 30th of December, 2017, and I was standing on the portico of St Martin-in-the-Fields, an Anglican Church in Trafalgar Square. This was my 7th trip to London, the first being at the age of 10 in 1955 when my parents took me and my sisters there to attend the Golden Jubilee of the Baptist World Alliance. Incidentally, my father, Watson Kirkconnell, on the opening day in Royal Albert Hall, addressed the assembly of 8500 Baptist representatives from 68 countries, on behalf of the 500 Canadian Baptist delegates. On this trip, at this early age, I was captured by the allure of London!

When my husband Ed and I decided to make our recent trip (end of December into January), I immediately googled the programs at St Martin's for the days we were going to be in London (we had taken in wonderful concerts here on previous visits). Lo and behold, there was a "Come-and-Sing" choir workshop offered for 12 English pounds, including music! Wow, that's for me, I thought, since I had previously enjoyed similar workshops in Lunenburg and Boston. The schedule told us to check in and pick up our music at 10, then report to the sanctuary to start at 10:15. As I stood waiting outdoors, others were gathering and chatting. Then the large doors opened!

Inside the sanctuary we were directed into the pews with our respective groups ("Alto? Right here."). Our conductor was an engaging young man named Andrew Earis and for this workshop we were joined by some members of St Martin's Voices, his choral group. From 10:15 till noon we practiced eight "much loved Christmas Choruses" including Handel's "And the Glory of the Lord" and the "Hallelujah





Chorus". I had sung four of the eight pieces before but found them all delightful! Incidentally, because of the brevity of the workshop, the ability to sight read music is a necessity. At noon, Andrew gave us time for a break with the direction to be back at the front of the sanctuary at 12:28 for the concert. A sign had been put at the front entry of the church to tell visitors there was an informal concert at 12:30 at no cost. By the way, most if not all of St Martin's lunchtime concerts are free. And many visitors came to ours including Ed who returned from his morning at The National Gallery (also free admission) right across the street from St Martin-in-the-Fields. A fabulous sanctuary, ethereal music, a large group of persons who love to sing to "the glory of the Lord", joining together for these few hours—what more could one ask for?! For me, it was pure ecstasy!

This wonderful experience was a foretaste of what was yet to come. At 6:30, in the same church, we heard Handel's *Messiah* by Candlelight with the Brandenburg Festival Chorus and Brandenburg Sinfonia with Robert Porter, Conductor. The four young soloists were superb. Then, after a half hour's duration when the sanctuary was emptied and readied for the next concert, we returned at 9:30 to hear Benjamin Britten's "A Ceremony of Carols" by Candlelight sung by the Rodolfus Choir with Ralph Allwood, Conductor. What a fabulous day it had been!

Of course, food for the soul also needs to be complemented with food for the body and, to assist with this, a first-rate café is situated directly beneath the sanctuary at St Martin-in-the-Fields, in the crypt—the floor

is covered with old, flat gravestones. But never fear, the delectable and reasonably priced fare offered in cafeteria style will divert your attention from this somewhat disconcerting fact.

Sunday brought even more musical delights. We went by foot and “the tube” from our hotel to St Paul’s Cathedral for the Sung Eucharist (a service of Holy Communion in which the choir sings many of the otherwise spoken parts and during which the congregation and choir sing hymns and responses) at 11:30 in the morning. The cathedral itself, built by Sir Christopher Wren with the foundation stone laid in 1675, is awe-inspiring. If you enter the cathedral as a tourist, there is a fee. If you enter as a worshipper for a service, you are warmly welcomed by an usher and taken to a seat beneath the incredible dome and vaulted ceilings. People from all around the world and all walks of life are drawn to St Paul’s to worship. It is an awesome, exhilarating, humbling, and unforgettable experience!

On Sunday evening, New Year’s Eve, we made our way to Cadogan Hall to see and hear Rainer Hersch and his orchestra. Seeing a clip of this on YouTube had actually been the enticement that prompted us to make this trip to England. The concert was great fun...but that’s another story for another time.

Our stay in London was certainly a memorable and glorious start to a trip that continued to Oxford, Bath, and Ilfracombe in North Devon. What do you think? If you love church music and breath-taking architecture in historic surroundings, a trip such as this is for you!

Susan Colquhoun lives in Amherst with her husband, Edward, and they are members of First Baptist Church, Amherst. They are also retired educationalists.

It is only when one knows the unutterability of the name of God that one can utter the name of Jesus Christ; it is only when one loves life and the earth so much that without them everything seems to be over that one may believe in the resurrection and a new world;

—Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Tegel Prison, Advent 2* [5 December 1943]

Baptist Polity as Lessons in Historical Theology: A Process of Translation

I once attended a workshop at a Baptist Assembly where the speaker addressed the topic of Baptist Polity. The speaker was a kind Christian pastor who began the session by projecting the points of Baptist Polity on a screen up front. He said: “These are the points of Baptist polity; this is what we believe.” Another pastor in the audience, who had just joined the convention from another tradition piped up in a condescending tone. “What’s so Baptist about these points? I’m from another evangelical



tradition and we believe in baptism by immersion, the separation of Church and State and the Priesthood of all Believers too. I see nothing ‘Baptist’ about these points!” It was then that I realized another approach to teaching Baptist Polity was in order. That there are “Baptists” and those who follow “baptistic” principles, to borrow the words of James McClendon Jr. In an age when the old denominational expressions are no longer considered important by many, and even unhelpful by some, gone are the days when we can speak for all by saying: “this is what we believe.” Perhaps a better, and, dare I say more Baptist approach, would be expressed as follows: “These are the points of polity that have defined Baptists historically. They mark the Baptist theological expression of Christian faithfulness as they have come down to us from the early modern era.”

Another point that we do well to avoid is directly transporting the views of early modern thinkers into our own period as if there is no historical distance between our times and theirs. I admire the faith and courage of Thomas Helwys, for instance. He understood and even paid

with his life for the Christian principle of liberty of conscience. Yet, we little justice to his memory if we pull him from his early modern context and apply him willy-nilly to twenty-first century issues. Instead, what is needed is some contextualization of both his world and ours. Helwys' apocalyptic eschatology, for instance, while understandable in the early seventeenth-century English context, would have disastrous results for the Church in our own era. Often overlooked is the fact that Helwys believed the Church of Rome and the Church of England to be the first and second beasts of the Book of Revelation; not exactly an ecumenical perspective.

What is needed in our own day is historical translation. How did Helwys's belief in the Lordship of Christ mark his faithfulness? How did his conviction that Christ is the sole head of the Church shape his theology? What do these principles look like in our own day? Can these teachings help us, with the Spirit's leading, to discover our own faithfulness? All these questions and more can speak of where we have come from and how we might face the future as faithful Christians.

The Reverend Dr. Scott Kindred-Barnes is the Minister of the Congregation of First Baptist Church, Ottawa.

News and Notes

We are sorry to miss the Rev'd Dr. Allan Gibson who died on 19 January at age 98. A supporter of CABF and the beloved Minister of Chester United Baptist Church for 39 years. An extraordinary community worker, a lover of railways, and an editorial writer for *The Chronicle-Herald*, many will remember his valuable column, 'Churches by the Sea.'

The Editor was surprised on Christmas Day when he was presented with the Senate of Canada Sesquicentennial Medal. It was given 'for community service.' In addition, your humbled Editor has been elected to the Acadia University Senate. The term ends July 2019.

The induction service for the Rev'd Dr. Don Flowers will be held at Port Williams Baptist Church on Sunday, 27 May at 3 p.m. All welcome.

The Wolfville Area Inter-church Council marked the ‘Week of Prayer for Christian Unity’ beginning Monday to Friday at the Manning Memorial Chapel, Acadia University, and Sunday at the Wolfville Baptist Church.

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| Monday: | Welcoming the Stranger |
| Tuesday: | No longer a Slave (on human trafficking) |
| Wednesday: | Overcoming Violence |
| Thursday: | Hearing the Cries of the Poor |
| Friday: | Our Covenant with God |
| Sunday: | That All may be Free – Dr. Anna Robbins, ADC, and potluck supper. |

A large congregation attended.

Five Delightful Years: A Minister with a View

Roger H. Prentice

The world war has been a merciless critic of men and governments, of political and economic theories, of rites and institutions. Perry J. Stackhouse, *The Sword of Christ and the World War*, p. 15

This is the opening sentence of Perry J. Stackhouse’s notable book, *The Sword of Christ and the World War*. In some ways, it exhibits the mind and spirit of one of the most remarkable Maritime Baptist ministers at the beginning of the 20th century.

Perry James Stackhouse was born at Saint John West, NB on 4 February 1875, graduated from Acadia in 1899 (BA), served his hometown, Tabernacle Baptist (1899–1901). He left for the Baptist-founded University of Chicago, gaining a B.D. (1904) and returned to the Tabernacle (1904–1907). In 1905 he joined with the Rev’d Henry Fish Waring of First Baptist Church Halifax for ‘special services’ at their Spring Garden Road edifice. Edwin King wrote, ‘... these brought deep conviction and awakening amongst the young people in our congregation, and resulted in many conversions.’

Stackhouse moved to the Campbellton church (1907-1910), somewhat surprisingly, but it was here where he published a vigorous defence of Waring's new book *Christianity and Its Bible* (1907), the same year of Rauschenbusch's iconic *Christianity and the Social Crisis*. Stackhouse presented an admiring view of biblical Higher Criticism and strong support for the Social Gospel. The Rev'd E. J. Grant, then Baptist minister of Hampton, N. B., initiated a pamphleteer war attacking Waring and his views so Stackhouse self-published, *An Answer to the Criticism of "Christianity and Its Bible"* and a *Discussion of the Baptist Position and the Question of Honesty* (1908).



In 1910, Stackhouse was called to be Minister of the First Baptist Church, Amherst, where he became a spokesman for the social gospel, especially to the congregation's 150 member 'Men's Bible and Social Class'. They not only studied the scriptures but also applied them to the church's work in the community. Stackhouse's primary book several years later, *The Social Ideals of the Lord's Prayer* (1916), was dedicated to this Class:

In Memory of Five Delightful Years of Fellowship and with
Vivid Recollections of our Sunday-after-noon Sessions
Where I Learned that Social and Economic Problems can be
Discussed with the Utmost Frankness by Men Representing
all Classes in Society and Many Economic Creeds in a Spirit
of Christian Brotherhood and with Great Profit to All.

Stackhouse moved to Utica, New York, in 1914. His first major publication was followed in 1917 with *The Sword of Christ and The World War*. Colgate honoured him with a D.D. in 1919 and Acadia in 1927. He moved to First Baptist Church, Chicago, staying until retirement in 1940. There, Stackhouse wrote *Bible Dramas in the Pulpit* (1926) and *Chicago and the Baptists* (1933). Retiring in 1940, he moved to Florida and passed away on 22 December 1944.



*St. Paul's Cathedral, London: The Commonwealth Church
(courtesy of Susan Colquhoun).*

Plan For The Rushton Lecture

It is planned to hold the annual Vincent Rushton Lecture on Saturday, 2 June 2018, at the Port Williams United Baptist Church. The Speakers and topics are still being considered at publication time. Check the CABF Web Site if you are interested. It is also an opportunity to pay individual annual dues of \$20 if not already done so.

Planning For The Future

Exciting times for the CABF: Rick Manuel has organized a series of comprehensive events to allow for discussion about possible plans that our organization may take. Wayne Marsh has been engaged to help the process. His expertise has proved invaluable. The results will be available and discussed at the Annual Meeting of the CABF on 29 September 2018 at First Baptist Church, Amherst.

The places that hosted the four general meetings were Wolfville Baptist Church (7 April), First Baptist Church Halifax (11 April), Burlington Baptist Church, Ontario (21 April) and First Baptist Church, Amherst (24 April).

We are grateful for those who attended and invite further comment if one would like to present supplementary ideas, hopes and dreams.