

Fall Meeting - September 26, 2009
Location: First Baptist Church Amherst

19 people attended - included in this were members of the Executive:

David Ogilvie
Andy Crowell
Keith Churchill
Jeff White
Ed Colquhoun (and Susan Colquhoun)
Lee Nicholas-Pattillo
Roger Prentice

As out-going President David Ogilvie presented two messages:

1. A note of thanks from Stan Hastey. Stan retired after 20 year career with Baptist Alliance. On behalf of ABF, John and Debbie Boyd attended the Alliance meeting and the retirement dinner for Stan. They took a retirement gift - a gift of Nova Scotia crystal. Stan and Betty were both very appreciative! Stan was pleasantly pleased and doubly impressed with the idea that the gift was purchased with Betty in mind. Many thanks to all, from Stan and Betty!
2. Greetings came from Paula Creighton-Dempsey, who is the lady replacing Stan at the Alliance. Paula's role is to nurture and nourish their identity partnerships with Alliance. ABF is one of the relationships the look to nourish!

David commented that for 3 years in his office of President he had many pleasures and he was honoured to have been President. One thing that was discussed on a number of occasions was whether ABF should continue.

David advised that one endeavour we attempted - however, was not successful at this past year. ABF offered to partner with Acadia on a lecture series. David (Ogilvie) and Jeff (White) met with Harry Gardner, President of Acadia, and offered to partner with Acadia on a lecture series of guest speakers, for students at the college. We suggested that the series would be named in honour of Dr. Lovcey - that we would agree together on speakers and topics and it would be at the expense of ABF. The response was 'no'. Harvey stated that he felt ABF was a controversial group; also a threat to stability. Harry feels there is not a lot of stability at the college at this time. Harry suggested that we could return in a year or two; however, the position was not likely to change.

Being an organization that wants to promote education and provide opportunities for 'inquiring minds', we thought this was a good offer and a good partnership. This is a definite on-go!

ABF will search for another means to share our ideas of education.

Motion: Andy Crowell motioned that the Nominating Report be accepted - with the disclosure he made - i.e. Lee Nicholas-Pattillo will agree to co-chair with Jeff White, as President, on an 'as needed' basis.

Seconded by Glen Manthorne from First Baptist Amherst. **Carried.**

Gwen Reid - Advised she is on the Board for Camp Wegesegam.

The camp is owned jointly with Convention; it is opened year round for groups who want team events, meeting, etc. The camp is struggling; it could use support. It needs money, and any kind of support any one or any individual is able to provide. Please consider this camp in the future. The website is: [wegesegam incorporated.com](http://wegesegamincorporated.com).

Discussion regarding Incorporation of Convention:

Convention continues its proclamation 'we are good people; trust us'. This year, Convention passed a whole new set of ministry standards. (Someone from ABF said these new standards are the '*curse of death*' to Ministers.) This statement was made because Convention has made it clear that the incorporation document that will be presented in August 2010 will use the 1905 - 1906 Basis of Union document as the point of reference. Unfortunately, the Basis of Union document was not presented at Convention nor was it provided with the Incorporation document.

The Basis of Union states that clergy must be substantially in line with the Basis of Union. This means Baptist clergy in Atlantic Canada must agree with what's in the Basis of Union. This is a great fear for Pastors and their accreditations! What will those who don't agree with the Incorporation document do? What will happen to their accreditation with Convention? The Gathering (in Ontario) and the Alliance share these concerns.

Terry Tingley (Bayside Church) addressed possible membership with Alliance. Terry understood that a church can register for membership with Alliance; however, he didn't think that an individual could register with Alliance. Therefore, what will Ministers who don't want to be members of the (newly incorporated) Convention do? What will happen to their credentials? Is ABF looking to partner with another organization/partner? Bayside is a small church; and there are likely other small churches who don't want to get lost in the shuffle. Terry wants it to be made know that the smaller churches don't want to get left out!

David Dexter stated that FBCH has started looking at possibilities. FBCH realizes the serious issues for clergy. However, we are not sure that we want to have dual membership - say with Convention and the US Alliance. We do need to seek out alternatives.

Pastors don't want to just 'bail out' of Convention; they require something to go to. It is felt that a step-by-step approach is required for Pastors, who feel they are unable to continue their partnership/membership with Convention. What association/organization can these Pastors align themselves with when it comes to credentials? What will be required of these Pastors? How will their churches and their careers be impacted, if they decide not to accept Incorporation of Convention?

By passing the new ministerial standards, Convention has clearly said, these are our terms. Maybe we (those who disagree with the terms set by Convention) need to say '*these are our terms.....*' And see what we can hammer out.

Hadley Hopkins suggested that ABF (or someone) needs to start looking at potential avenues now! **Hadley** suggested that ABF may even want to incorporate themselves. Hadley explained that the working committee has disbanded. Their work is done. Revisions to the Incorporation document have all been accepted; Convention meets in November and the final Incorporation document will be sent to the churches in January 2010.

David Dexter stated that we need to wise and patient. We should see the 3rd draft of the Incorporation document.

Although concerns have been raised to address the fact that the Basis of Union is not a document that Atlantic Baptist are familiar with, Convention seems to give this concern little attention.

Terry Tingley stated that he felt it was time for ABF, and others interested and concerned about incorporation to start looking for other associations/organizations to partner with.

David Dexter stated that he believed (as explained by Dr. Paris in this afternoon's presentation) we should continue through to the conclusion of Incorporation. Leaving before the conclusion of the process, even though we aren't being heard, might say that we aren't hearing Convention.

David Dexter (from FBCH) advised that along with the Halifax Association, he and members of a committee have prepared a 12 page letter outlining the concerns with the existing Incorporation document. Gary Nelson, (the Gary Nelson who is the Chair of Trustees at Falmouth Baptist) was on this committee. This committee was this letter was sent to convention. Although the 12 page document was acknowledged by Convention; there was no commitment to apply the recommendations made. This document is on the website for FBCH; and will be added to ABF website.

Discussion followed that the existing membership of churches will not be 'grandfathered'. During the past year (2009), when Convention representatives visited the various associations to present the Incorporation document, they advised that existing member churches will automatically become members of the new

incorporated Convention. Recently, Convention lawyers clarified that was not correct. Once Incorporation is passed in 2010, all member churches will have to 'sign on the dotted line' to indicate their desire to be members of the new Incorporated Convention. This, according to the lawyers, is a non-negotiable item. If a church doesn't sign - they are not in convention.

Next August (2010) is not the final step of Incorporation. Once the Incorporation document has been passed, the next step for Convention is to review each constitution of Convention, and ensure that each constitution meets the criteria, guidelines, etc outlined in the Constitution. This in itself will be a great task!

All agreed that it was important that we - AFB and interested churches - stay active in our pursuit for alternatives to Convention. We need to check out our legal options as well. We need to get stronger.

Jack Matthews from FBA indicated he felt strongly that ABF should continue to exist!

Lee suggested:

- we record the notes from this meeting
- call a meeting of the ABF executive
- discuss the concerns noted here
- determine if ABF can arrange for a meeting for interested churches, before ABF's fall assemble
- information and updates will be posted to ABF website.

It was agreed that Lee would take the message from this meeting to the ABF executive at a meeting to be scheduled for the near future. An update/response to this conversation will be placed on ABF website.

Also, Lee will ensure that the 12 page letter referenced by David Dexter will be added to the ABF website.

Adjourned meeting at approximately 4:30 pm.