

**Sunday School Culture Then and Now:  
A Prospectus of First Baptist Church, Ottawa**

**Barbara Carman Garner**

Dr. Daryl Busby, Dean of the Canadian Baptist Seminary, in his article on the future of the Sunday School in Canada published in 2013, pays homage to Robert Raikes, the 1780 British founder of the Sunday School Movement. Raikes' goal was to get poor children, especially boys, off the streets, teach them how to read and write, and educate them in Bible truths that would place them on a higher road than the one on which they were travelling. Raikes' supervision of his Sunday School, founded to help the poor children in the Gloucester area, led to his jokingly being referred to as "Bobby Wild Goose and his ragged regiment." Raikes counted among his friends and supporters both Charles and John Wesley as well as the preacher George Whitfield. In 1783, after a three-year trial of his Sunday School, Raikes wrote an article about it in the *Gloucester Journal*, the paper he had inherited at the age of twenty-two on the death of his father. Amidst criticism of Raikes' Sunday Schools, published in *The Gentleman's Magazine* and elsewhere, John Wesley in 1778 wrote to a friend, "I verily think these Sunday Schools are one of the noblest specimens of charity which have been set on foot in England since William the Conqueror" (quoted by Busby). Wesley recognized the merits of Raikes' enterprise as early as 1784 observing, "Perhaps God may have a deeper end thereto than men are aware of. Who knows but what some of these schools may become nurseries for Christians" (Development 5).

What does Raikes' Sunday School initiative have to do with First Baptist Church Ottawa's Sunday School practices during the 161 years since its founding, you may well ask? Some of you might be surprised to learn that in 1957, First Baptist Church Ottawa's Centennial year, the Sunday School presented Robert Raikes attendance awards to forty of its students who had achieved at least 80 percent attendance. That year the average attendance was 75, with the maximum of 93 pupils reached on December 6. Raikes Diplomas were given to First Baptist Sunday School students until the 1970's as the diplomas awarded to John and Douglas Ivison below confirm. Douglas' seven years of faithful attendance earned him all six seals of honour.



# Robert Raikes' Diploma

AWARDED BY THE

First Baptist Church - Ottawa



This Certifies That John Iverson has made a perfect record, according to the Standard of our School during the entire YEAR ENDING June 1975 and is entitled to this Robert Raikes' Diploma and to enrollment upon a Roll of Honor



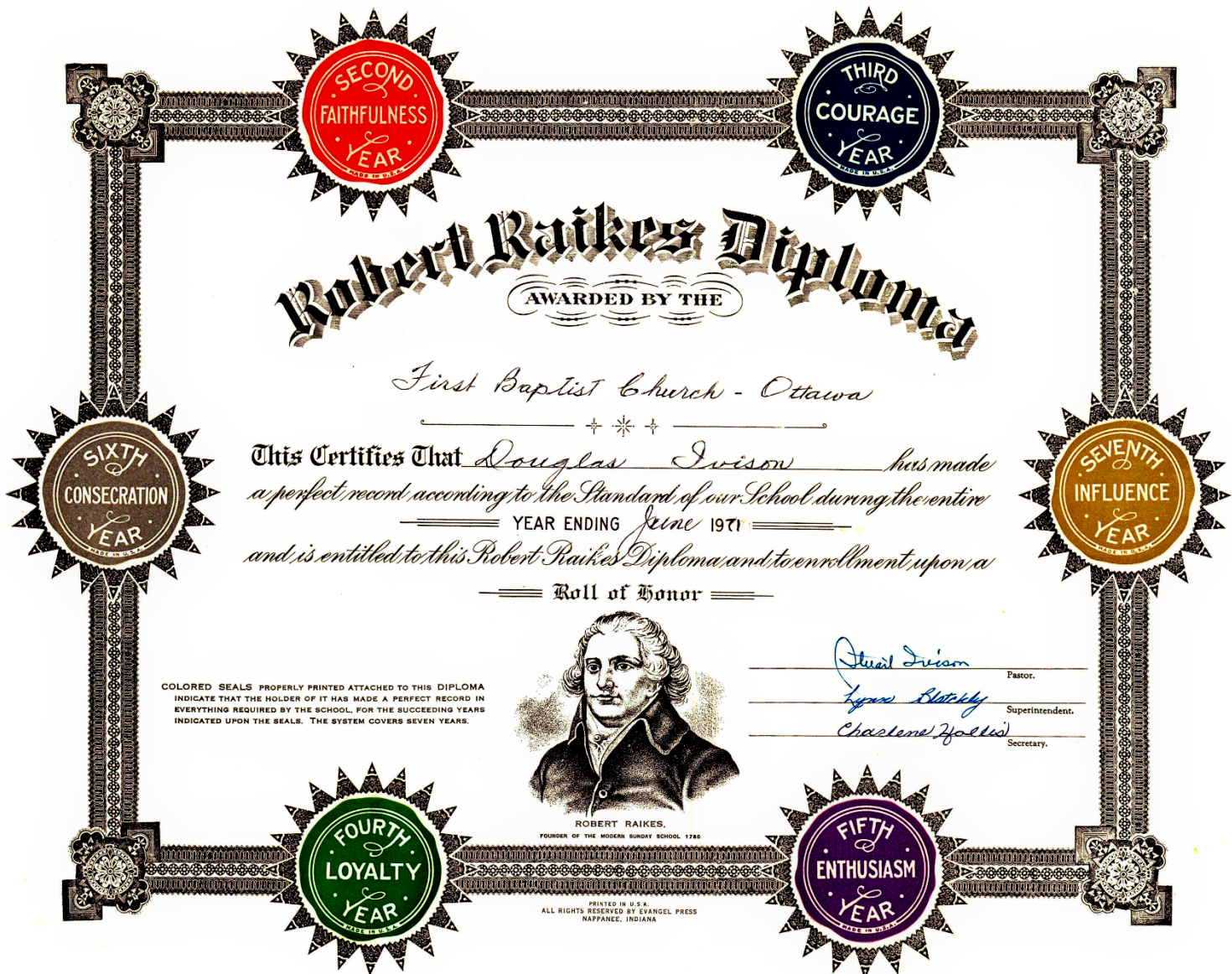
ROBERT RAIKES, FOUNDER OF THE MODERN SUNDAY SCHOOL, 1780

Leopold J. Cummings Pastor  
Lynn Blotchy Superintendent  
Robert Dalters Secretary

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First Baptist Sunday School followed other directives endorsed by Raikes. For example, it awarded two “examination and memory prizes” to Junior division pupils in 1957, one being received by Ken Cuddy who is still a member of our congregation.

In 1957 First Baptist’s *Religion Education Committee* reported: “This fall Miss Ines Watson, our Associational Field Worker, conducted a five weeks’ course



in Teacher Training for beginners and Primary Leaders in this church. Seven girls enrolled in this course.” First Baptist was thus addressing the widely expressed concern that Sunday School teachers were inadequately prepared and should be given training. Several of First Baptist’s Sunday School teachers participated in a variety of workshops and training courses during the decades since then, a practice consistent with another Robert Raikes directive. He was adamant that Sunday School teachers should have institutional training and initially sought out and paid dame school teachers one shilling per Sunday to serve as administrators of his Sunday School ministry.

The Sunday School began to flourish in North America in the early nineteenth century. Various churches have been put forward as founders of the first Sunday School established in Canada, but there is no consensus whether Nova Scotia, Quebec or Ontario has the right to make such a claim (see Appendix A). Once the American Sunday School Union was founded in Philadelphia in 1824 with its first National meeting in New York in 1832 (see Appendix B), a number of Canadian churches joined and sent delegates to its first annual and later triennial conventions. On three occasions the International Sunday School Association’s (ISSA) conference was held in Toronto, Ontario, in 1881, 1905, and 1911. The American Sunday School Association (ASSA), like its British counterpart, proposed various means by which Sunday School teachers could receive training. One issue upon which the North American delegates could not agree, however, was whether those taking such courses should be obliged to sit exams. The training of Sunday School teachers, as well as the introduction of uniform lesson plans adopted at the Chicago conference in 1872, marked the beginning of the provision of materials suitable for the different age groups of students attending Sunday School. Uniform lesson plans occupied delegates during many subsequent sessions of Sunday School Association conferences. The subject was given full historical coverage in the 700 plus page Report of the Proceedings of the Toronto meeting of the International Association in 1905 (*Development*).

Robert Raikes firmly believed that leading children to Christ would in turn benefit their parents who were often drunk and unable to maintain a safe home for their offspring. Many tales of children bringing their wayward parents to Sunday School meetings are documented in the history of the British Sunday School, in pamphlets distributed by the children benefitting from the religious education they received there, and in the early Sunday School library books published by the Religious Tract Society. Many of these publications related tales of inadequate or non-existent parenting. This type of account was the exception rather than the norm in the records of the Canadian Sunday School Movement, although Letitia

Youmans, after attending a Chautauqua ASSA Conference, was motivated to establish a branch of the Canadian Christian Women's Temperance Union (WCTU) in Picton, Ontario, to try to curb the deleterious effects that alcohol was having on the young men in her Sunday School class. The young girls often came to her in tears with tales of their fathers beating them and their mothers while under the influence of alcohol (Youmans 80-101 and Busby 17).

Many Canadian Sunday Schools, as we shall see, established strong links with the WCTU, with Bands of Hope, and even with the suffragette movement, the latter clearly evidenced by the activities of Nellie McClung, Sunday School teacher and social activist. Did any of the Ottawa Baptist Association (OBA) churches observe Temperance Sundays and encourage their pupils to 'take the pledge'? This practice was common in New Brunswick Baptist churches, yet those I have queried in Ottawa do not think this practice was common in Ontario Baptist churches. To test the veracity of this observation, I researched the role of the WCTU in Ontario.

Mapping this broader social dimension of the ministry of the Sunday School informs our perception of the work accomplished by Ontario women towards better parenting and sobriety in the family home. Sunday School teachers were predominantly women, and their positions gave them recognition as a result of the role they played in the church's religious education programs. The statement "women teach, men manage" gives one some idea of the Sunday School hierarchy, although there were also many male Sunday School teachers. (Kmiec, MA thesis). This pronouncement, attributed to Hesba Stretton, later became a commonplace saying.

In the early 1900's, Canadian female public-school teachers lost their jobs if they married, but they could still serve as Sunday School teachers, and many did. The literature suggests that they often took on a motherly advisory role, as did the fictional Mrs. Allen, the Avonlea minister's wife and the Sunday School teacher whom Anne in *Anne of Green Gables* greatly admired. For Lucy Maud Montgomery, Mrs. Allen represented the ideal teacher who sharply contrasted with the Sunday School teachers she herself had experienced growing up on Prince Edward Island. Her teachers simply read the Quarterly lesson aloud and never encouraged the children to discuss the material or to ask questions. Montgomery tried to emulate Mrs. Allen, both as a Presbyterian minister's wife and as a teacher in the Sunday School. Her scrapbooks housed at the University of Guelph include programs that she organized for her Young People's Guild, and she recorded Sunday School events that she organized in her journals.

Social historians record that it was not unusual for day school teachers to teach Sunday School, to participate in Women's Institute projects, to belong to the WCTU, and/or to organize Bands of Hope, groups that also had a religious affiliation.

Like the Sunday School, the Band of Hope originated in Britain. It was formed by a Baptist Minister Jabez Tunnicliff and a few temperance advocates in Leeds, England, in 1847. To proclaim, as Child Studies historian Stephanie Olsen did in a 2013 lecture she gave at Carleton University and in the discussion following that lecture, however, that Bands of Hope had no religious affiliation and were completely separate from the church is wrong. I was pleased to see that she later modified her opinion that these bands were solely trying to encourage manliness and temperance among their young members. Bands of Hope did hold meetings in more neutral buildings than a Methodist, Baptist or Presbyterian church so that the Band would appear non-denominational, but the religious as well as the temperance agenda was part of the Band of Hope's mandate.

Although the Band of Hope's mission was a social welfare one, mass choirs comprised of members of British Bands of Hope performed many hymns for Queen Victoria at the Crystal Palace, including one written by their founder Rev. [Jabez Tunnicliff](#). Verification of one hymn sung at the Crystal Palace is found in *Jude's Mission Hymnal*. The last hymn in the collection is the Temperance Song "Fight the Drink" with words by A. Sargant and music by W.H. Jude. Its title includes the parenthetical note "Sung at the Crystal Palace Festival by 5000 voices" (Jude 101).

The Hope U.K. website explains the Band of Hope's main objective and describes how the bands developed: "to teach children the importance and principles of sobriety and teetotalism. In 1855, a national organization was formed amidst an explosion of Band of Hope work. Meetings were held in churches throughout the UK and included Christian teaching." A note appended to this article explains: "The name, Band of Hope, has been changed to **Hope UK**, a United Kingdom Christian charity based in London, England which educates children and young people about drug and alcohol abuse. It was founded in 1855 as the **Band of Hope**" (*Hope UK*). I have often purchased Hope U.K. Christian Christmas cards in charity shops and/or churches in England.

What do we know of the growth of Bands of Hope closer to home? It may surprise you to learn that in 1890 there were 14,945 Bands of Hope in Ontario under the auspices of the WCTU. The Ottawa WCTU recorded "work among the

young ensures ultimate triumph.” The Ottawa Band held its meetings at the Orphans’ home and in the Orange Hall “to indicate the membership was open to all children. Rev. T. Garrett, C. of E, Rev. J. White, Presbyterian, and Rev. J. Allan, Methodist, were all on the platform and addressed the children on the ‘evils of intoxicants’” (Cook).

An interesting anecdote found in the records of a British Band of Hope shows the positive effect the British movement had in Toronto. The *1919 - 38th Report of the Rushden & Higham Ferrers, Irthlingborough & District Band of Hope Union* highlights the influence that those trained in the Band of Hope in Britain had on the temperance issue in the city of Toronto. The Union president focuses on and contextualizes an account that he believes will offer hope as well as moral counselling to his British readers:

The other day I came across this account of what our work is telling in Canada. A Rev. John Holland, while staying in Toronto, took special pains to discover the reason for the strong temperance atmosphere of that great Canadian city. So clad in mufti and made to look as unlike a minister as possible he had interviewed all sorts of people. The best and most reasonable explanation was given by a policeman. ‘It’s like this sir’, he said, ‘there’s a rare lot of people in this city who came out here from the old country. In their young days those people used to attend Band of Hope meetings, belong to Sunday Schools and various Temperance Societies. While they were at home and surrounded by drinking people their opinions didn’t count for much, but when they came out here and settled down and found this was a chance to get rid of the drink entirely their early training taught them what to do in the matter’. Mr. Holland suggested that it was quite evident that although Band of Hope workers and others had so often deplored the futility of their efforts to arrest the drinking habits of the British people the seed sown in Britain had been harvested in Canada and that this amply rewarded the teachers for their labour. The subject of the address from which this reference is taken was A Harvest of the Band of Hope work and our hope and prayer is that even yet England may soon awaken to its dangers that such words can be applied to her. (Vorley)

Notice that the guidance received in Sunday School is mentioned along with that of Bands of Hope in the Toronto policeman’s explanation for “the strong temperance atmosphere” in Toronto.

Robert Raikes once told Rev. Thomas Stock, who was instrumental in helping him found his Sunday School, "The world marches forth on the feet of little children," a statement appropriated by other Sunday School leaders. Many authors of literature on the history of Sunday Schools note that in North America 80 percent of church members come from the Sunday School and stress the importance of Christian Education programs in our churches (a statistic also quoted by Busby and many of the writers of reviews of current Sunday School curricula that I have consulted).

The establishment of a Sunday School ministry in the Ottawa area was an important part of First Baptist Church's fieldwork that proved successful in planting a number of churches in the early days of Baptist ministry in Ottawa, namely: Eastview (1872), McPhail (1893), Fourth Avenue (1899), Calvary, (1915), and the later establishment of Bethany (1952), Pleasant Park (1957), and Bromley Road (1957). More recently First Baptist also supported establishing Bilberry Creek and Kanata Baptist churches. Many of these outreach and community strengthening endeavours fall under the rubric of church planting that originated as a Mission and Sunday School ministry. Michael Hatfield in his paper on Church Planting will have more to say about the Sunday School's role in this endeavour.

Knowing something of the history of the Sunday School Movement in Canada helps us to identify the original goals of the movement, but more pertinent to our discussion this evening is my initial question, "To what extent does Raikes' legacy inform the Canadian Sunday School as we now know it?" Dr. Busby opened his 2013 article treating Sunday School culture in Canada with a pertinent anecdote that sets this question in relief:

Late at night on November 1, 2013, a drunk driver bowled over an old statue in Queen's Park, Toronto. The driver was unhurt, and the statue received minor injuries. For a little while, the statue remained unknown until someone discovered its identity – Robert Raikes, the Father of the Sunday School movement. Imagine that: in the midst of statues to politicians, governors and explorers, there stands a statue to a man who started a church program. Like the bronze statue, has the Sunday School movement been bowled over by culture?





Statue of Robert Raikes which was run into by a driver toppled onto the driver's car around 4 a.m. (TOM PODOLEC / CTV NEWS TORONTO)



In attempting to contextualize the present Canadian Sunday School movement, it behooves me to address the turmoil in the OBA and elsewhere caused by the introduction of the New Curriculum (NC) designed for use in the United Church of Canada and in Baptist churches in 1963/64. As a result of societal changes, there followed shortly thereafter a marked drop in Sunday School attendance across all denominations (see Appendix A).

The reaction to this NC has been described as almost as divisive among Canadian Baptists as the T. T. Shields controversy in the 1920's over the liberalism of the theology being taught at McMaster University that caused the split among Baptist congregations. A number of Independent Baptist Churches came into being, calling themselves The Union of Regular Baptists. Much later many of them combined to form the Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches (Johnston). I quote from Johnston the following details published in a report discussing the reception of the NC by The Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec (BCOQ):

Some members of the Evangelical United Brethren were opposed to the NC but that did not stop the denomination from joining the UCC [United Church of Canada] in 1966. More criticism came from members of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec. There were even calls to ban it, despite the fact that the Baptists had co-published the NC with the UCC. However, a group of Baptist ministers from Ottawa wrote that banning the NC went against "the Baptist concept of spiritual liberty." They concluded that "experience warns that no curriculum can be expected to gain universal acceptance among us . . . [but] it is easier to unite in rejecting what is offered than to agree on what should be accepted." (55) (Complete statement from Ottawa Baptist ministers is reproduced in Appendix C)

The editor of the Baptist Sunday School publications, Rev. Frederick Helps, also defended it, saying, "If this material is accepted in our Baptist churches it will be a very great step forward. It will strengthen the faith of young people (Johnston 56).

Pastor Stuart Ivison, the Sunday School superintendent, Anne Skinner, and the congregation of First Baptist Church sanctioned the use of the NC in First Baptist Sunday School classes. The material was available through the Baptist Convention for a year, but as a result of many protests against its methodology as well as its content, officials in the Convention office in Toronto decided to burn their entire holdings (\$40,000.00 worth) of the Baptist version of this curriculum

(Jones). First Baptist continued using the NC for another two years, ordering it from the United Church that was still using the UC version. Sunday School superintendent Anne Skinner reflected on the positive features of this curriculum in her annual report on “The Importance of Sunday School”: “The teachers in our school are using these materials with enthusiasm. We may not agree with the interpretation given in some of the lessons, but this is understandable. But, when used by teachers who know why they are teaching, these materials are excellent.”

Has First Baptist Sunday School over the past six decades continued to reflect on and mirror the concerns that Raikes and his early cohorts expressed concerning both the social and religious training of our youth? In 1957, one of the younger women assisting at the Primary Sunday School level in First Baptist was Lynn Blatchly who later participated in the one-year women’s leadership training program offered between 1946 and 1968 by McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario (Anderson), as did another member of First Baptist, Reinhilde Rochow. Lynn grew up in the faith at First Baptist and later served many years as a Sunday school teacher and as Sunday School Superintendent. Reinhilde was also active in the ministry of First Baptist serving with her husband Gunter as Sunday School superintendent in 1980 and from January to June of 1981. Their children attended Sunday School during my term as Sunday School Superintendent. The Rochows moved to Bilberry Creek Baptist Church and became active members of that congregation. Barbara Chivers (nee Barbara Jean Cogle) graduated from the two-year women’s leadership program at McMaster in 1960 and later became a dedicated Sunday School teacher, chair of the Christian Education Committee and co-superintendent of the Sunday School with her husband Ken Chivers in the fall of 1981 and between 1982 and 1984.

First Baptist has used a variety of curricula between 1966 and 2017, including David C. Cook and Wood Lake materials, as well as American Baptist Sunday School curricula, all of which were selected with careful consideration of the needs of our church school teachers and students. In 2017, First Baptist adopted an online curriculum, *Kids Sunday School Place*, also in use at Bilberry Creek Baptist Church. The size of our Church School was a factor in establishing criteria for choosing this curriculum. The Proclamation Commission stressed that the curriculum be Bible centered and familiarize students with stories from both the Old and New Testaments. It should have good teacher resource material for planning the Sunday school lesson and for involving the children in the teaching/learning process. Many of the curricula available suggest that older students perform dramatic enactments of parts of the lesson before the younger children. Since the then current Sunday School was small, and our program

scheduled during the period in the Sunday morning worship service following the children's story, there was not sufficient time for an extended opening session, although the children sing choruses before going to their individual classes. During the summer, all students except those in the nursery meet in one class, so it becomes imperative that the teachers have lesson plans that are flexible and can be accommodated to children varying in age from 4-10. Facing the ever-growing difficulty of finding volunteers willing to undertake the commitment that teaching a Sunday School class requires, all of our OBA congregations should recognize the necessity for the entire congregation's support of both teachers and students in making their church schools successful. Traditionally ministers taught senior and/or adult Sunday School classes. Some infused new life into the Sunday School by serving as Sunday School Superintendent. I cite as example Pastor Dale Soble who teamed with me as superintendent for a year in order to have a more hands on experience of our Sunday School. Having the minister fulfill such a role is no longer feasible. Since our congregation is too small to hire a youth pastor to take charge of the Sunday School, the task falls to the superintendent(s) and the teacher volunteers.

By occasionally tapping the resources available among members of the congregation, some Sunday school sessions that are theme oriented, if well-planned, can achieve memorable Sunday School experiences for all those in attendance.

To proliferate Sunday School homework with book clubs, week night meetings at the church, visits of Sunday school teachers to their students' homes, all directives which Sunday School curriculum writers who stress the social outreach dimension of the Sunday School mandate advise, can easily overwhelm their young charges as well as their parents. Such proponents would do well to reflect on one of the early arguments against allowing the Sunday School to become attached to the church. Ministers and congregants alike in those early days voiced the fear that the Sunday School would attempt to replace the nurturing process of children by parents in the home. The intensity of some modern Sunday School ministries, I would argue, does not necessarily support the true mission of the Sunday School. In some ways it could be said to mirror the intensity of the methodology employed by many early Sunday School directors who, in their attempt to save souls, regaled their young charges with stories of the early deaths of young children found in many late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Sunday School pamphlets and books (see Appendix D).

Culture has changed, and I for one hope that our operating principles are no longer driven by such a rubric as “Spare introducing children to the terror and sadness of death, and thereby diminish the power to persuade them to love and follow Christ.” As Christian parents and educators we believe we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us, but we still need to recognize that He accompanies us on our quest as we seek *gently* to guide our young charges in the paths of truth. The words of the founders of *The Boys Own Paper* (BOP) (1879) and *The Girl’s Own Paper* (GOP) (1880), both published by the British Religious Tract Society (see Appendices E and F), still provide us with food for thought. The editors of the BOP clearly state their understanding of Christian faith:

True religion in their view is a spirit pervading all life, in work or in play; and this conviction rather than any purpose of direct doctrinal teaching, gives a tone to this Paper, which has already met with very wide and cordial acceptance. (Olsen 26)

Each dedicated Sunday School teacher can glean useful advice from this statement. Teaching discipline, doctrine and discipleship are all important aspects of the nurturing of children in the Sunday School, but we must ensure that in following these directives we instruct children in ways they can understand, and show them loving kindness as we “educate” them, which in many instances, as Robert Raikes was well aware, means leading them out of darkness into the light of the Rich Christian Heritage that is ours to share as followers of Jesus Christ.



## Appendix A:

James Taylor, "The Development of the Canadian Sunday School." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*.

### Sunday Schools

Raikes's innovation, quickly copied in Britain, was brought to Canada mainly by the PRESBYTERIAN and CONGREGATIONAL churches.



Hillhurst Presbyterian Sunday school group, Calgary, c 1912-16 (courtesy Glenbow/NA-1639-1).

### Sunday Schools

Sunday Schools were founded 1780 in Gloucester, England, by newspaper publisher Robert Raikes to take labouring children off the streets on Sundays. Religious instruction, later the main curriculum, was at first secondary to teaching reading and writing. Religious education has been an element in the Roman Catholic Church for some 2000 years, primarily through catechism classes. However, Sunday schools have been limited almost exclusively to the Reformed or Protestant traditions, largely as a legacy of Swiss theologian John Calvin's stress on rational learning.

Raikes's innovation, quickly copied in Britain, was brought to Canada mainly by the Presbyterian and Congregational churches. Methodism tended to apply the concept more broadly to the whole community of believers; between the visits of

the ordained or licensed "circuit riders" or "saddlebag preachers," lay leaders maintained the congregation as church school with classes for all ages.

### **First Canadian Sunday Schools**

The date and location of Canada's first Sunday school are unclear. The Church of England (*see* Anglicans) had one in Halifax in 1783. A Congregational minister, Reverend Francis Dick, may have organized the first Sunday school in the Canadas, in Québec in 1801. The first documented inauguration was by Secessionist Presbyterian minister Reverend William Smart, who arrived in Brockville, Ontario, 7 October 1811 and opened a Sunday school the following Sunday.

The movement grew rapidly. The Montréal-based Sunday School Union of Canada was founded probably in 1822, and in 1836 its apparent successor, the Canada Sunday School Union, was formed to promote development in new regions. In 1865 a convention of teachers and leaders resulted in the new Sunday Schools Association of Canada.

### **Curriculum Development**

Initially the Bible was the sole curriculum, with much emphasis placed on memorization of scripture. Gradually supplementary curricula were developed locally, and in 1874 the International Uniform Lessons series was introduced, based on current pedagogical methods. In 1908 a graded curriculum became available and refinements followed.

The first curriculum developed entirely in Canada was the United Church's "New Curriculum" of 1963. It was attacked in the media by conservative denominations for being too "liberal" in its theology and ended several decades of curriculum cooperation between the United and Baptist churches. The New Curriculum was widely praised by educators and theologians and copied in varying degrees by other denominations.

The Anglican Church's curriculum, called "Parish Education," comparable in scope, was published in 1966. All of these curricula, however, had the misfortune to be introduced just when Sunday school populations began to plummet in all denominations. United Church registration declined from 757 338 in 1961 to 179 345 in 1993; during the same period some 1800 Sunday schools were closed. Other denominations experienced similar losses. Sociologist Reginald Bibby notes that 2 out of 3 Canadian adults claim to have attended religious services regularly as children, but only one in 3 now exposes children to religious education in the churches. Since the Protestant churches have traditionally depended on Sunday schools as the source of adult memberships, Bibby forecasts church attendance declining to one in 6 by the turn of the century.

In recent years, the most popular Sunday school curriculum in Canada has been *The Whole People of God*, from the independent publisher Wood Lake Books. Originally developed co-operatively by congregations in Regina, Saskatchewan, starting in 1983, it grew to be used by some 3000 congregations in the United, Anglican, Presbyterian, Lutheran and Baptist churches in Canada. Adapted for export, in both Protestant and Roman Catholic versions, the curriculum has become popular internationally, reaching an additional 7000 congregations in the United States, Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand, and is being used as widely as the Philippines, Bermuda, Scotland, South Africa, Guyana and Thailand.

### **Expanding Influence**

It is of interest to note that some Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches have recently adopted the use of Sunday schools to augment the traditional religious formation provided by the Divine Liturgy. A number of Jewish, Moslem, Hindu, Buddhist and Sikh communities have also adapted this Christian institution to provide their children with an intentional religious education deemed necessary to counter the Christian culture and secular society of North America. Curriculum style has been taken from the Christian models. For example, Jodo Shinshu Buddhist churches have incorporated the singing of Sunday school choruses such as "Yes, Jesus loves me," by simply replacing the key word to "Yes, Buddha loves me."

### **Appendix B:**

Ellen Little, "A Brief History of the American Sunday School Union."

Updated by Clare Withers. *Elizabeth Nesbitt Collection @ Pitt: American Sunday School Union.*

### **A Brief History of the American Sunday School Union (Little)**

Founded in 1824 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the American Sunday School Union (ASSU) had as its mission the promotion of Sunday schools and early literacy and the spiritual development of children. The ASSU was a significant publisher and provider, of books and periodicals for children and played a role in shaping the direction of 19th century children's literature in America.

In 1790 there were no free public schools in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Leaders from several denominations organized the First-day or Sunday-School Society of Philadelphia, the first known organization whose purpose was specifically to

promote Sunday schools. In less than twenty years, many such organizations sprang up in other cities in the United States. By 1817, ten or more of the local Philadelphia societies or “unions” consolidated into a general union and The Sunday and Adult School Union was begun. Within seven years of its inception, ten states and the District of Columbia had auxiliary unions. By December of 1823, union representatives from various cities met in Philadelphia for preliminary discussions about forming a national organization and The American Sunday-School Union was formed.

Among their objectives was the dissemination of useful moral and religious information. Believing that religious literature suitable for young readers was largely non-existent, they endeavored to publish books and periodicals for this market. The Union’s requirements for the literature they published were stringent. Content was to be of moral and religious, age appropriate, good literature, and American. Initially each piece required unanimous approval by a Publications Committee. This committee was comprised of representatives from at least three different denominations and all works had to be free of denominational bias. Because some groups viewed fiction as unsuitable for young minds, the Union policy stipulated that imaginative works should not provide false presentations of life and duty. Consequently, the literature published by the American Sunday School Union primarily focused on non-fiction topics such as history and biography, along with poetry, hymns, and didactic teachings. From its first publication, Mary Martha Sherwood’s *Little Henry and his Bearer*, through its many other books and periodicals, the goal remained the same--to make their publications accessible to as many people as possible. To this end, many authors, artists and workers contributed their efforts at no cost. The Union in turn provided their literature at cost or, when possible, for free. Eventually, the Union even began to produce “libraries” of books that could be purchased at a reduced rate by schools and thus provide free circulation to small rural communities. The American Sunday-School Union continued to publish until 1960. In 1974, it became the American Missionary Fellowship an organization that remains active today, though their mission has changed in function and purpose from the parent organization founded so many years ago (see note below).

**Note:** Details about the ASSU’s name change from the American Missionary Fellowship to **InFaith** in 2011 were announced in the following press release :

### **American Missionary Fellowship Announces New Name**

According to the press release, American Missionary Fellowship, a nondenominational mission that enables called and committed followers of Christ to serve with purpose and passion within our nation's borders, has changed its

name to "InFaith," effective September 1, 2011. Known as the American Sunday School Union from 1824 until 1974, InFaith has been bringing the unchanging truth of God's Word to the changing culture of the United States since 1790.

InFaith's field staff members follow God's call on their lives and use whatever methods are appropriate and effective to serve the people on their fields. They live out their faith in Christ and influence thousands of people through children's ministries, youth and young adult ministries, pastorates, church planting, prison ministries, nursing home ministries, urban ministries, intercultural ministries, Christian camping, chaplaincies, Bible studies and discipleship ministries, and specialized ministries in thirty-eight states.

To honor its rich history, the mission uses "An American Mission" as a tagline for its new name, echoing its previous name. This tagline is especially suitable for InFaith not only because of its focus on serving in the United States but also because its eclectic ministry methods reflect the character of America itself. The United States is a nation of individuals from many different backgrounds and cultures, and InFaith is a mission called to serve these people with many approaches to ministry.

Christian Telegraph.com. Web. 9 Oct. 1917.

<http://www.christiantelegraph.com/issue13981.html> (Site no longer available)

## **Appendix C**

“A Recall to the Baptist Principle of Spiritual Liberty By a group of Ottawa ministers” (Rev. John C. Bell Rev. S. M. Holmes Rev. Stuart Ivison Rev. Frank E. Locke Rev. Frank Rice Rev. E. K. Smith Rev. Walter T. Steven) Ottawa Baptist Ministerial Association (text courtesy of David Ivison)

### ***A Recall to the Baptist Principle of Spiritual Liberty***

The history of most Baptist bodies shows that while they do really exist to give expression to the principles out of which our movement grew and which still provide the justification for our distinct place within worldwide Christendom, we are often in danger of being diverted from our central principles without realizing



it. Especially is this true when we are necessarily engaged in a debate on some issue that generates a considerable amount of emotion. Basic Baptist principles tend to be forgotten as the discussion continues, and, in the end, the issue may be resolved along lines that leave some of the most important of them out of account altogether.

The net result of such a process is that we lose ground in relation to our central position and each regression of this kind tends to blur our understanding of our role and witness both within the universal church and towards the world. Each time that this happens the Baptist identity grows less distinct and with loss of identity frustration increases. The effects of such experiences are cumulative throughout the denomination and are felt in every church and by every sensitive individual.

The principle most in danger of being thus overlooked, is, regrettably, though certainly not by intention, the vital one of spiritual liberty. A group contending vigorously, as is their right, for some matter on which they feel strongly may be led, through the zeal with which they press their case, to try to impose their decisions on everyone else within the fellowship. The much professed principle of voluntarism disappears and little room is allowed for sincere persons or churches who hold different views to follow the courses that seem best to them.

Numerous examples of this development in Baptist affairs can be cited. Attempts have been made at various times in Baptist bodies in different parts of the world to impose fixed patterns of doctrinal interpretation, stereotyped manners in public worship and rigid procedures in church polity, but never with success. Once the issue becomes clear, the body as a whole, if truly Baptist in its principles, rejects such attempts, even though at times its adherence to principle may be very costly.

Liberty to interpret and freedom to re-state Christian doctrines must be maintained for all Baptist members. Similarly, the freedom of the local congregation to order its own worship, to call its own pastor, and to instruct its children, young people and candidates for membership must be guarded from dictatorial interference, either through pressure from within or harsh criticism from without.

Admittedly, one of the conditions of survival and effective witness on the part of a Christian body is that its members reach a consensus on things deemed to be of primary importance. The Baptist consensus so far as the Christian message is concerned, is that of historic Christendom in general. We have never claimed any monopoly on the gospel. We have been ‘catholic’ in the proper sense of that word. We can express our faith, for example, in the same hymns as do other communions, because, on the whole, the substance of it is not different from the faith of Isaac Watts, Charles Wesley, John Keble or Bernard of Clairvaux, to name just a few representatives of diverse ecclesiastical traditions.

In our methods of arriving at and disseminating the faith, however, we differ very markedly from many others. We go directly to the Bible first. And seek there the way of salvation as it is offered to us in Christ. This privilege we ask not only for ourselves, but for all who desire it. Creeds and doctrinal statements, no matter how venerable, come second. They may be helpful guides to thought. But that is all. They are only **interpretations**, formulated at a certain time and **in the light of the knowledge then existing**, of what the Scriptures contain and of what is conveyed to us by our religious experience. As such they are subject to re-statement and revision, and, as understanding grows, some of them must inevitably be discarded in favour of formulations that do greater justice to the facts of revealed truth.

This right and privilege of going to the Scriptures first is the very essence of the spiritual liberty around which the Baptist movement has grown and been maintained. No creed, no statement of faith, no human interpretation, and, above all, no human interpreter must be allowed to determine in advance and with finality, what conclusions the inquirer shall be compelled to reach in this most sacred of all quests. Our pastors, teachers and theologians are there to help us, but they are not allowed, within our Baptist fellowship, to lay down officially what God shall say to us, or the form of words in which his message to our souls shall be expressed.

Within recent months we have been experiencing, from just beyond our immediate circle and from within it as well, attempts to deprive us of this cherished liberty. A pamphlet entitled **the new Curriculum in the Light of Scripture** has been thrust upon us for reasons best known to the author. We make no attempt to judge his motives in circulating his criticism to so many of our ministers, church

clerks and church school teachers. We point out, however, with all charity, but nonetheless emphatically, that while he is perfectly entitled to hold the views that he does, and to publish them as widely as he wishes (we will defend his right to do that), he writes, not as one who understands the Baptist concept of spiritual liberty, but rather as an exponent of authoritarian and doctrinaire credalism. The “light of Scripture” in the title of his pamphlet is, of course, his own interpretation of what Scripture means and none other. We grant him the full right to interpret Scripture as seems best to him; we only point out that setting up one’s own interpretation as the norm for all others is not the Baptist way.

We can be tempted to credalism of this kind through a desire to uphold the “authority” of the Bible. But when we do this we forget that the Biblical revelation is much vaster than we give it credit for being. Once we lay down a rigid doctrinal theory of “inspiration” we tend to reduce the Biblical revelation to the point where it can be made to fit into our doctrinal system instead of letting the Bible speak for itself. We are then further tempted to employ our own doctrinal system as a standard by which the beliefs of all other Christians must be judged. No true Baptist can accept this restraint; much less will he try to impose it. It diminishes the authority of the Biblical revelation rather than enhances it, and destroys the liberty under which every individual is entitled to approach God’s word for himself. Bibliolatry, the worship of a book rather than the worship of God, is the product of mistaken notions regarding the Bible’s true authority.

Similarly, we may be led into an attempt to define for all believers, in terms that happen to suit ourselves, the doctrinal expression of basic Christian experience. Atonement, for example, the experience of being restored to “at-one-ment” with God, and that solely by his grace, is surely the greatest experience that sinful man can know. The Baptist point of view with regard to it has been that while there are many theories advanced to explain the fact, it is the genuineness of the experience that counts most, and that this can be very real even though the redeemed person may not have decided which of the theories of atonement best accounts for what has taken place between himself and his Redeemer.

We must beware of the desire to have a set form of words at any cost, and we must be careful, when using Scriptural quotations, not to select and marshall them merely as proof texts to fit neatly into a pre-arranged doctrinal pattern. We must avoid erecting the kind of closed doctrinal system from which the early

Baptists and those who held similar views to theirs were glad to escape. “I am verily persuaded”, said John Robinson in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, “the Lord has more Light and Truth yet to break forth out of His Holy Word.” It is in order to be ready for the reception of such new truth that Baptists have struggled to maintain their spiritual liberty.

The great blessing of this liberty is that it leaves us free to contemplate the **total** fact of Christ, in whom God is reconciling the world to himself. As with the Biblical revelation as a whole, the Word spoken in the Incarnation is far greater than can be encompassed by any doctrinal statement. Christ surpasses all that has ever been said or written about him, even in the gospels themselves (John 21:25). Baptists have always known that there is a danger of allowing a doctrine to get in the way of our **total** vision of Christ in his infinite greatness, whether it be a doctrine with respect to his birth as such, or one concerning any other aspect of his person and work. Paul preached “Christ” without mentioning the manner of his birth. He conveys to us in many passages of his writings the ineffable mystery of the Incarnation, and leaves us with a profound sense of the exalted nature of our Lord despite this omission.

Our Lord himself, when calling his first disciples, imposed no credal test. He presented himself as he was and said, “Follow Me”. We believe that full spiritual liberty is essential to an ever growing acquaintance with Christ on the part of those who desire to follow him. To know him in the full power of his Saviourhood and Lordship one must be free, under the leading of the Spirit, to explore all the possibilities of the Christian life, using all available helps and sources of instruction without being bound by any other Christian’s preferences in doctrinal interpretation.

We are not concerned in this appeal to defend or even recommend any one curriculum of study. Not all of us use the so-called “New Curriculum and some of us do not even endorse it. Some are using it with an open mind as to improvements that might be made in the light of experience. We **are** concerned, however, with spiritual liberty, which we believe to be very much at stake in the present discussion. We plead in Christian love for all churches and individuals within our fellowship to be allowed to select and use the tools of instruction that seem best suited to their needs. We have faith enough in the leading of the Spirit and in our fellow Baptists to be confident that no harm can come of this.

We ask that our Department of Christian Education be permitted to make available, to the full extent of their resources and ability, those materials that are desired by **each part of our constituency**. Where it is evident that a considerable number of the churches (fully as devoted to Christian nurture as the others) desire a curriculum that can best be provided in co-operation with a sister denomination, we beseech our brethren to cease their objecting and to consent to this being done. The cost will be borne, ultimately, not by the Convention treasury, but by those who purchase the materials. Meanwhile, a great service will have been rendered by the Department, in line with the expressed will of the Convention Assembly.

Similarly, we urge that the Department as we are convinced it is willing to do, make every effort to assist churches to obtain whatever teaching aids they desire. Already, arrangements have been made through the good offices of the Atlantic Baptist Convention to make available the Judson Press (American Baptist) materials. The Uniform Lessons series is also being continued. Some churches will want still other publications apart from those mentioned. The Department cannot, with its limited staff, do everything it might like to do, but it should not be harassed and hampered while trying to do its best. The problem is a very complex one and calls for much patience and forbearance on the part of all of us. The day may come when, through united effort, the churches will have access to Canadian Baptist materials produced by ourselves. This is an ambitious dream, but even more difficult tasks have been accomplished, and the dream is a worthy one. The announcement that a committee of trusted leaders is already at work on this project gives promise of future achievement in this regard, but it can only come to pass if unity is maintained among us.

We do not deplore in any way the fact that discussion is taking place, much as we deprecate some of the things that have been said. We believe that the discussion itself is stimulating many people to take a fresh interest in Bible study and in the work of their church schools, which is all to the good. We hope that in the end a fairly general consensus may be reached, but experience warns that no curriculum can be expected to gain universal acceptance among us. There will still be need for churches to have liberty to choose what they desire. At the present discussion has demonstrated so clearly, it is easier to unite in rejecting what is offered than to agree on what should be accepted.



While we are working through our problem, let us not be distracted by self-appointed critics from outside our body. Neither let us forget, in the heat of debate, our heritage of spiritual liberty by which we should always be best known to our fellow Christians and to the world around us. The name "Baptist" means very little once that goes. We might just as well disappear in the welter of nondescript sects.

Above all, let us not, through intemperate words or precipitate action, defeat the very purpose towards which we all desire to move.

## **Appendix D**

Patricia Kmiec, *Among the Children: Sunday School Teachers and Evangelical Womanhood in Nineteenth Century Ontario*. MA thesis (47).

For the first half of the nineteenth century, Sunday school literature reflected the main goal of the schools at the time: conversion. The conversion experience was required for both boys and girls and was encouraged in young children as early as possible. Literature that focused on conversion, eternal life and salvation, tended not to be explicitly gender specific, as the urgency for redemption was more important than gender differences. The main subject of this conversion-focused literature of the early Sunday schools was death. Children were frequently reminded of the realities of both adult and childhood death. These stories were intended to make their readers face the question of where they would go after they died. They were told repeatedly about the fate of many ill-struck young people who had not converted before their early deaths. Child-size graves, death beds and heart-broken family members were common images in these stories.

Books such as *Light on Little Graves*, published by the American Sunday School Union in 1848, could be found in Sunday schools across North America." Stories and songs titled; "Death of a Pious Child," "Triumph in Death," and "The Fear of Death Removed," were recited by children and teachers in Sunday school classrooms. (100) The focus on death, and the threat of an eternity in hell for all non-Christians was directly intended to scare children into conversion, as well as to

stress the importance of evangelizing to others, including family members and other children who might otherwise be redeemed before death.

Avery, *Behold the Child*, p. 95. 100

Lynn, Robert and Elliot Wright. *The Big Little School; Sunday Child of American Protestantism*. New York: Harper and Row, 1971:42.

## **Appendix E**

Richard Noakes. "The Boy's Own Paper and Late Victorian Juvenile-Magazines." *ResearchGate*.

The Religious Tract Society (RTS) knew that representing the BOP as the antidote to these publications [Penny Dreadfuls, etc.] would win the approval of the affluent and respectable Middle classes. But the architects of the BOP and its even more successful sister periodical, the *Girl's Own Paper*, recognized that in order to displace the 'dreadful' the new Periodical would have to ape some aspects of these lower publications.' The problem was articulated by RTS member, James Bennett, who in 1882 wrote: 'It was absolutely necessary that the publications be of a kind that boys and girls who had been accustomed to buying these abominable publications would be attracted by and induced to purchase.' Parents, teachers and educationists recognized that children would not be drawn from 'penny dreadfuls' with the heavily religious and dreary didactic material that filled the 'Child's Companion', the 'Youth's Magazine' and other early nineteenth-century juvenile periodicals: it had to be achieved with a more appealing diet of exciting but wholesome stories and illustrations about things that interested children. The BOP's first editor, George Hutchison, was acutely aware of this problem and had to persuade the conservative clergymen and evangelical social reformers who formed the RTS General Committee that a periodical 'having articles on common subjects written with a decidedly Christian tone' rather than 'articles on religious subjects' would be one of the ways of adapting the Society's evangelical mission to juvenile readers of the 1880s.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup>Hutchison, cited in Dunae 'Boy's Own Paper.' (Hutchison was here paraphrasing the eminent nineteenth century educationalist and clergyman Thomas Arnold Fyfe 'Industrialized Conversion' p. 86)

## **Appendix F**

Enever, Alison Louise. "*More than just a magazine*": *The Boy's Own Paper and Girl's Own Paper 1914-1967.*" PhD thesis.

Enever's concluding remarks confirm that for over a century the editors of BOP and GOP tried to uphold the original editors' convictions concerning the nature of the religious content of these magazines:

This study has restored both papers to their rightful place, alongside each other. For the Society BOP and GOP were a means of reaching readers, and providing a Christian perspective on every aspect of their lives. Religion was not to be preserved for sermons and Sundays, but to be diffuse and any activity could be viewed within a Christian ideological framework. Whilst each of the editors saw their pivotal role differently, most appear to have believed they had a greater responsibility than mere entertainment. There is evidence that for many readers BOP and GOP were seen as a friend, and through the papers readers entered into dialogue with the editors, contributors and fellow readers. The voices of the Society, the editors, and the readers have all been woven into the text, becoming part of its discourse. Both BOP and GOP were 'more than just a magazine.' (277)

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