

The Sabbath Recorder

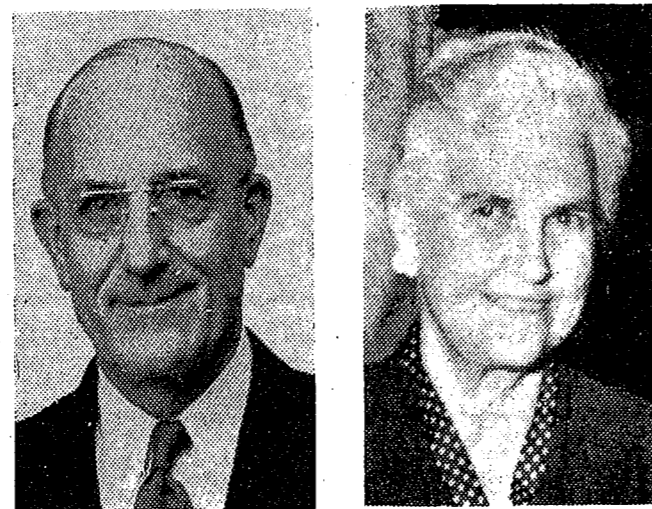
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CONGRESSMAN VISITS CHINA

by John Bevis



Dr. and Mrs. George Thorngate, former Seventh Day Baptist missionaries to China.

Congressman Jerry L. Pettis, Republican from California's thirty-third district, and member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, recently returned from a trip to China. In view of the interest that Seventh Day Baptists have in China we thought it would be good to share some of his report with *Recorder* readers.

He was able to visit Shanghai, where Adventists had operated the Shanghai Sanitarium and Hospital. He found the hospital still in operation though now used as an air force facility. The former Adventist Chapel next to the hospital, is now used as a warehouse. Evidently the Adventists no longer have any organized work in China. Pettis reported that it was estimated there were only some 70,000 Christians remaining in China and that all denominations belong to the "Church of Christ."

Regarding the future of Christianity in China Congressman Pettis stated: "I, for one, do not foresee a time in the future when Christian missionaries will be permitted in China. The intense feeling of national pride that prevails, the conviction that China was exploited for centuries by Western nations, the determina-

tion to shut out influences that might prove distracting or divisive — all these factors I think keep China closed to direct exposure to Christianity. How, then, is the gospel commission to be carried out? I do not know. The vastness of the country and the vastness of the problem must be put in the hands of the Lord, with prayer for His guidance."

Seventh Day Baptists still have no firsthand report of the work of our church in China. Perhaps it is safe to assume that like the Adventists our work there has practically disappeared. This brings to mind an old hymn "Work for the Night Is Coming." We have many doors open to us now, places where leaders are pleading for Seventh Day Baptist missionaries to come. We have doors open to us in Africa, Burma, India and other areas — we must work while we can. How dedicated to our task are we? Look at the Our World Mission budget report. Is this an indication of our concern for others, of our response to the Great Commission? Perhaps it is still true that actions speak louder than words.



The First Seventh Day Baptist Church of Hopkinton, Ashaway, Rhode Island. Organized in 1708 this is the oldest active Sabbatarian church in America. Rev. Edgar F. Wheeler is the pastor.

**THE
SABBATH
RECORDER**

October 13, 1973

The Sabbath Recorder

First Issue June 13, 1844

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Member of the Associated Church Press

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WELCOME NEW SUBSCRIBERS TO THE RECORDER

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STUDENTS AT MILTON COLLEGE

Milton College began its 107th year as
a chartered educational community. Sev-
enth Day Baptist students at Milton this
year include: Kenneth Johnson, Robin
Fitz Randolph, Scott Smith, Susan Cru-
zan, Donna Lane, Lisa Cudahy, Karen
Osborn, Ruth Burdick, Jerry Vaught,
Faith Oliver, Mike Harris, Ruth Ann
Wopat, Stephen Thorngate, and David
Thorngate.

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\$1.25 (for the school year). —Every
church should take advantage of this
special price.**

EDITORIAL

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE MINISTRY

Seventh Day Baptists are experiencing a shortage of ministers. Many of our churches are pastorless and many of our now active ministers are approaching retirement age. It should be a matter of deep concern that we have so few young people in theological schools. It should also be a matter of concern when we see several capable young people leaving the ministry for secular employment. At Conference we listened to presentations concerning growth and seemed to be concerned about it. However, we need many more ministers just to be able to hold our own, to say nothing of outreach into new areas.

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things" (Romans 10:13-15).

Perhaps we would do well to encourage our ministers more—let them know we appreciate their dedication and zeal. We definitely should encourage more young people to consider making the ministry their life's work. No doubt there are many capable laymen who could be encouraged to pastor small churches or give guidance to budding fellowships. A step was made in this direction at Conference when the Missionary Board was asked to devise a plan for financing part-time professional and/or lay people in churches or fellowships not qualified under current guidelines for full-time support.

I believe that it is time that we as laymen accept more of the responsibility for our declining numbers. It has become too easy to hold the ministers responsible for the church's lack of statistical success. It is true that the pastor is a key person in the life of the church, but he must have dedicated laymen to stand with him or despite what he does the church will not grow. Let's face it, some churches grow in spite of their ministers. Pastoral leadership is but one factor in church growth. Isn't it time that we Seventh Day Baptist laymen had a little fire put under us? Are we to sit back for another 300 years?

The minister, just like any of us, needs time off from his job. Most churches give the minister a paid vacation, but perhaps it would also be good to specify a certain day of the week as the pastor's "day off." Remember that the pastor and his family are only human — they are subject to the same physical and emotional limitations as other people, they too need a change of pace from time to time.

In these days of spiraling costs we should remember that the pastor has to pay just as much for his groceries and gasoline as we do. Each church should regularly review the salary and benefits given the pastor. The question should never be, "How little can we get away with in pay for the pastor?" but rather, "What can

we do for our pastor?" It is written: "God is no man's debtor. Care for the servant of the Lord, and the Lord of that servant will honor you."

We should not expect a person in the ministry to be so dedicated as to attempt to live on nothing. Just because a person is in the ministry is no reason he too should not have nice clothes, a good automobile and education for his children. Many of our churches could well afford more for the work of the minister and the church if we would put into practice God's plan of tithing.

The pastor should be considered the church's most valuable human asset. He is our leader, our teacher, our undershepherd. Surely he can do a much better job if he can meet his obligations without unnecessary worry concerning his family's needs.

The story is told of how a worried pastor of a small struggling church dreamed one night a dream that on the following Sabbath he related to his congregation without embellishment or comment. He related to them that in this dream he was driving his congregation in a bus up a steep hill, when suddenly the motor went dead. He got out and called to the passengers to come and help him. "I'll pull and you folks push and we'll all get to the top of the hill." So he went to the front of the bus and pulled and pulled. Perspiration poured from him and he gasped for breath, but the bus did not budge. He stopped to look behind him to see what was the matter. He found that the passengers in the bus had all remained in their seats.

Growth comes when the laity and clergy work together.

HOW TO GET RID OF A PREACHER

In a tongue-in-cheek reply, Bishop Gerald Kennedy answered a request for information on a "convenient and painless way to get rid of a pastor."

He made four suggestions:

1. Look him straight in the eye while he is preaching, and say, "Amen," once in a while. He'll be preaching himself to death in a few months.

2. Pat him on the back and brag on his good points. He'll soon work himself to death.

3. Rededicate your own life to Christ and ask the preacher to give you a job (preferably winning some lost soul to Christ). He will die of heart failure.

4. Get the church to unite in prayer for the preacher and he'll soon become so effective some larger church will take him off your hands.

It's only fair to observe that this may not always work. What may happen is that pastor and people become so much a team that the growth of the church becomes irresistible.

A church united in prayer and committed to personal soul winning will make almost any pastor great. Why not try it and see?

THE SABBATH RECORDER

SEVENTH DAY BAPTIST SOUND STUDIO DEDICATED

The Seventh Day Baptist Sound Studio was dedicated on Sunday, September 16. The studio, located in the denominational building, is the result of the dreams and labors of many people. For many years a dream of the American Sabbath Tract Society has been to expand its facilities for greater service in audiovisual aids. There has been a growing need for quality recording equipment at our General Conference sessions. Likewise has been the need for studio facilities to produce high quality radio tapes, sacred record or cassette albums, narration for film strips, tape and cassette duplicates, cassette letters and a place to preview and store audiovisual materials.

To fill these needs came leadership that acted as a catalyst in turning the dream into a development project and that established financial and human resources to get the job done. The human resources included men and women who offered expertise in equipment selection, system design, studio acoustics, electronics, carpentry, studio operational technique and interior decorating. The long list of people that gave unselfishly of their time and talent include Rev. Alton L. Wheeler, Rev. Leon M. Maltby, Rev. Albert N. Rogers, Mr. Calvin C. Babcock and Mr. Gordon Lawton. Besides these are the members of the Audiovisual Services Committee that gave countless hours.

The financial resources that made the project possible include the Seventh Day Baptist Memorial Fund, the American Sabbath Tract Society and the Elizabeth Fisher Davis Bequest. The bequest is especially gratifying because Mr. and Mrs. Davis loved music and the Lord. It seems fitting that with the dedication of this audiovisual facility a memorial placard be fixed at the studio entrance that reads:



IN LOVING MEMORY OF
ELIZABETH FISHER DAVIS
and her husband
LUTHER S. DAVIS

Mr. and Mrs. Davis were married in 1902 and spent some time as missionary teachers at the school in Fouke, Arkansas. Later they returned to Shiloh, N. J., where they operated a farm. They had three sons: Paul G., Arthur C., and E. Fisher, all of whom attended the studio dedication.

Elizabeth Fisher was a teacher of organ and piano, as well as a composer of numerous songs. A number of her children's songs are in print and are available from the Seventh Day Baptist Publishing House. She is best known for the words and music of "We Young Folks Are Seventh Day Baptists," which is also known as "Young People's Rally Song."

The influence of the Davises on young men and young women was remarkable. At least three young men who lived in her home went into the ministry and many others found their lives blessed by their prayer, spirituality, and wise counsel. Even in her advanced age, her constant aim was to do something lasting for the children — to publish tracts or a book of songs for their guidance. It is

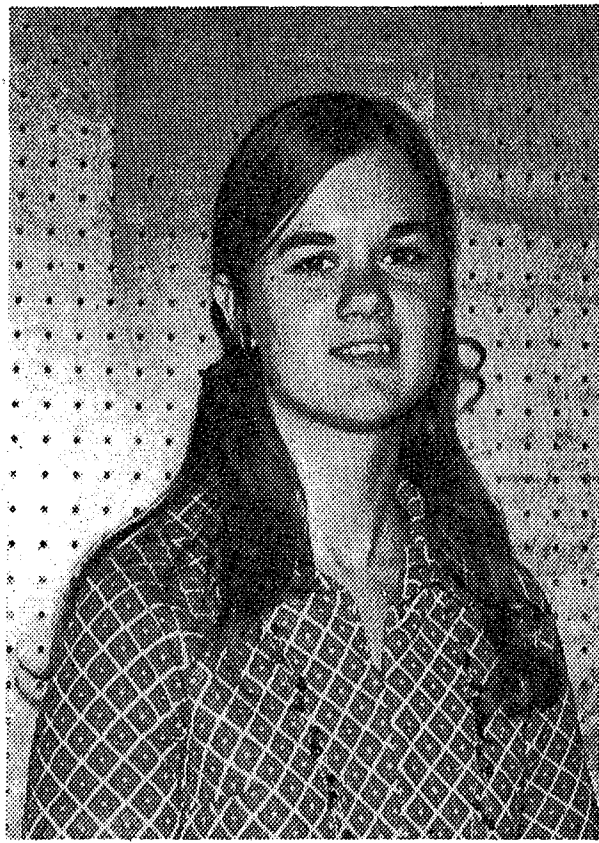
SOME BIRD

When some churches desire a new minister they want one with

- the strength of an eagle,
 - the gentleness of a dove,
 - the grace of a swan,
 - the eye of a hawk,
 - the friendliness of a sparrow,
 - the night hours of an owl,
 - the industry of a woodpecker,
 - the attractiveness of a peacock,
 - the tough skin of a gander,
- and when they get that bird they want him to live on the food of a canary.

—Selected.

SECRETARY JOINS STAFF



Joining the staff at the Seventh Day Baptist Publishing House is Miss Janice Williams. The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Udell Williams of North Loup, Nebraska, Janie attended the University of Nebraska in Lincoln majoring in business administration before coming to Plainfield.

She has served two years in the Summer Christian Service Corps working this year with the Battle Creek, Michigan, Seventh Day Baptist Church. Janie will be dividing her time between duties in the Publishing House and in the Historical Society. She is an expert typist, and has many skills and ideas to share in this important work. We appreciate her dedication, zeal, and willingness to serve in this very vital work of the Lord.

truly fitting that the Seventh Day Baptist Sound Studio was dedicated to Elizabeth Fisher Davis and Luther S. Davis for their love of the Lord and of music.

Heading up the work in the studio is Mr. Gordon Lawton. The churches are invited to make full use of these facilities and are asked to write to Mr. Lawton for further details. Your ideas and suggestions are also welcomed as we seek to expand and improve this ministry.

—by the editor

MINISTERIAL EDUCATION—Rex E. Zwiebel

Word has come that Dr. Walter E. Hancock is seriously ill in Madison Hospital, Madison, Tennessee. Dr. Hancock is an ordained Seventh Day Baptist minister and is a member of the Salem, W. Va., Seventh Day Baptist Church.

* * *

Seventh Day Baptist ministers who are using the Center for Ministerial Education's Cassette Service are asked to check and see if they have a tape that is overdue.

There is a possibility that ministers have asked for the tape service and have not received it. Please, write the SDB Center for Ministerial Education, Box 868, Plainfield, NJ 07061, if this is the case.

The tapes are "talking magazines." They make good resource material for different function committees or groups in the church.

Churches, whose pastors do not have a cassette recorder, are urged to purchase one and make it available for the use of the pastor. Thus he will be able to avail himself of these opportunities.

Our Prayer Corner

Suggestions for Prayer This Week

Pray for:

1) The efforts of the Baptist World Alliance in obtaining religious liberty and human rights for all persons, especially for Alliance representatives who intercede with governments on behalf of the oppressed.

2) Fellow Baptists who are located in over 100 countries, especially for those who labor for the Lord under difficult and trying circumstances including hostility and abuse. Remember especially those whose governments restrict their work and witness.

3) Mr. and Mrs. Clayton Pinder as they lead out in the growing ministry of the Crites Mountain Mission in West Virginia.

Children's Page

"Philip the Preacher"

A STORY FROM PASTOR CHUCK

Rev. Charles Graffius

Salemville German Church

Philip was a preacher and a missionary; a hard worker for Jesus. In today's story, Philip was in a city called Samaria. He was busy telling the people of Samaria about Jesus. He told them that Jesus wanted to come into their hearts and help them live a good life for God. Crowds of people came to hear Philip and see the miracles that God was doing. The whole city was very happy because of Preacher Philip. People, who couldn't walk, were healed and could walk again. No wonder the people were happy. Wonderful things were happening and many people were learning about Jesus.

A man who was a wizard took Jesus into his heart! Of course that was the end of his being a wizard. From that day on, he was working for Jesus.

Now it was just about this time that God decided that He had another job for Philip. As a matter of fact, God sent Philip a long way from Samaria to a place out on the edge of the desert.

About the time Philip arrived at the place where God told him to go, who do you think should be coming down the road but the treasurer of the country of Ethiopia. He was really the treasurer for the Queen Candace of Ethiopia. He was a very important man. He had been on a trip to Jerusalem and was now going back home. He was riding in his royal chariot and reading from the Bible only he didn't understand what he was reading.

Now that is just the reason that God wanted Philip to come out here in the desert. So you see, here is Preacher Philip and here also is treasurer of the Queen who is reading his Bible but can't understand it. God always works things



out just right if we will only let him or if we will just go when God wants us to go or talk when the right time comes.

This is exactly what Preacher Philip did. He explained all about Jesus to the treasurer and showed him from the Bible that he should take Jesus into his heart and be baptized. The Queen's treasurer was all excited and he took Jesus into his heart.

About that time, the chariot was passing a small lake and the Queen's treasurer said to Philip, "Look! There's some water. Why can't I be baptized?"

They stopped the chariot and went down to the water where Preacher Philip baptized the Queen's treasurer. The Queen's treasurer climbed back into the chariot where he hurried back to Ethiopia to tell the Queen and all his friends about Jesus.

With this job completed, Preacher Phillip went on his way, very, very happy about being able to tell this man about Jesus. Preacher Philip told the good news about Jesus everywhere God sent him.

Do you think that perhaps the Queen's treasurer started a Christian church back in his home country so that more people could learn about Jesus?



THE PREACHERS — The Profits of Middle America

Review by Jane Wesman

Ever since Marjoe Gortner confessed his charlatanism, sophisticated America has wondered if evangelism were dead. Little do they know of the multi-million dollar empires which still exist and which were created by nine of the world's most flamboyant and outspoken "ministers."

In *The Preachers* (St. Martin's Press, July 31, 1973, \$8.95), James Morris probes behind the scenes to reveal how big-time evangelists operate today. He examines the faith-healers Oral Roberts, A. A. Allen and Kathryn Kuhlman; exposes the right-wingers Carl McIntire, C. W. Burpo and Billy James Hargis; and investigates swinging Reverend Ike, the celebrated Billy Graham and the eloquent Armstrongs.

For nearly twenty years, Mr. Morris studied these one-man denominations which command a following of at least eleven million and are heard on more than a thousand radio and TV stations daily. Carl McIntire alone is heard on six hundred! Each preacher also promotes himself through a personal newsletter or magazine, and has vast mailing lists to solicit funds or sell gimmicks such as prayer cloths to heal the sick.

The evangelists' impact on the American public is immeasurable. Oral Roberts heads his own university which he established with a loan from the federal government. Billy Graham is a friend of presidents and royalty. Reverend Ike can pack his church in New York City with 5,000 followers every Sunday. When he appeared at Madison Square Garden, 11,000 people had been turned away.

At a time when the congregations of organized religions are steadily shrinking, the evangelists are gaining followers daily. Evangelism is a major force in America today and *The Preachers* reveals the inside story.

Here's what the critics say:

"Acid profiles of contemporary American evangelists, Morris's approach is scrupulously erudite yet readable, his tone generally skeptical yet balanced as he limns the careers of these 'one-man denominations' . . . Excellent."

—Kirkus Reviews

"Now, with cool dispassion and intensive research (including personal attendance at hundreds of 'revival' meetings), (Morris) has produced this absorbing book . . . Followers may resent the book. Others will find it fascinating."

—Publishers' Weekly

Price \$8.95. Order from the Seventh Day Baptist Publishing House,
Box 868, Plainfield, NJ 07061



The Second Brookfield Church. Can you guess the date of this photograph?

BROOKFIELD FINDS HISTORY EXCITING

Rev. Albert N. Rogers

Dr. Robert C. Whitford, speaking at the 150th anniversary of the Second Brookfield Seventh Day Baptist Church, claimed early Abolitionist convictions of his family and others led as well as distance factors for the establishing of the church in 1823. A retired professor of Long Island University, Dr. Whitford traced the history of the church buildings. His grandfather was an outspoken opponent of slavery and his father aided the Underground Railway.

Eli S. Bailey, first pastor of the church, often discussed medical and theological questions and topics with students from Colgate University over the hills a few miles. Darwin E. Maxson who grew in the church became a Union Army chaplain and taught at Alfred University many years. Lucy Clarke Carpenter, daughter of one of the prominent families, served with her husband in the Shanghai mission 1846-74. William Calvin Whitford was editor of *The Helping Hand* and treasurer of General Conference more than a quarter century. His cousin William Clarke Whitford who had grown up in the First Brookfield Church of Leonardsville had already become president of Milton College, Milton, Wis. The church hosted General Conference on the Brookfield Fair Grounds in 1913. These facts were reviewed by the Rev. Albert N. Rogers of the Historical Society, a more recent son of the congregation.

The unique ecumenical experience of the Second Brookfield Church was cited by Rev. Theodore L. Conklin, Syracuse, N. Y., former executive of the New York

State Council of Churches who supplied the pulpit as a young man. The church building is owned jointly with the American Baptist congregation in Brookfield having been erected cooperatively in 1837. Dr. Conklin and other former pastors and supply pastors brought greetings.

The Rev. Leon R. Lawton, executive vice-president of the Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society and a former pastor, preached at the Sabbath morning service stressing the constant witness of spirit-filled lives. John D. Bevis publishing director of the American Sabbath Tract Society and editor of *The Sabbath Recorder* spoke briefly and read greetings from the general secretary of Conference, Rev. Alton L. Wheeler. Since it was a birthday occasion, Mr. Bevis brought gifts for all—copies of the *Recorder*.

Mrs. Donna Spooner Tanney, local historian and author of the recently published book, *The Eternal Hills* dealing with Brookfield characters, spoke words of commendation and quoted from a summary history of the church which she had prepared. Clark M. Todd, Milton, Wis., told some of his reminiscences. An exhibit of early photographs and documents proved interesting.

Late in the afternoon a historical marker was dedicated on the site of the first meetinghouse built in 1824 three miles up Beaver Creek above the village. Sister churches from Adams Center, DeRuyter, Leonardsville, Syracuse, and Verona joined in the observance.

Those involved in the program and planning included Mrs. Barbara Balcom, Mrs. Leona Burdick, Raymond F. Burdick, Mrs. Joan Ferguson, Mrs. Martha Mills, Rev. Neal D. Mills, pastor, Mrs. Nora Morse, Mrs. Frances L. Palmer, Francis W. Palmer, Mrs. Gloria Palmer, Calvin Whitford, Dean M. Worden.

Seeking to "see things . . .
from God's point of view" as those

CALLED FOR COMMITMENT CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH

First Presentation*

Jesus from the very beginning of his public ministry went about "teaching . . . and preaching the gospel of the kingdom" . . . saying, "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:23, 17).

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness" (Matt. 6:33).

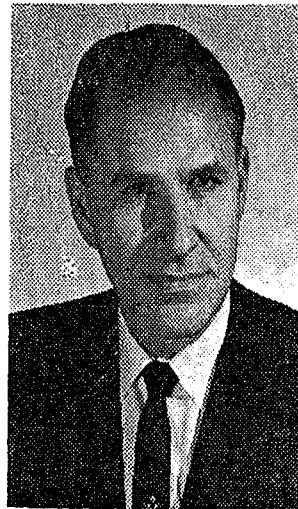
" . . . I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it . . ." (Matt. 16:18b).

"You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide; so that whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name, he may give it to

you. This I command you, to love one another" (John 15:16, 17).

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind . . . you shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 22:37-39).

The Greek word which Jesus used for "church" is "ecclesia" meaning "those who are called out" or "those who are called together" with the strong implication in the context of revelation that it is the Lord who calls appealing to individuals to become a part of His church. Acts 2:47b speaks of how "the Lord



added to the church daily such as should be saved."

Ray Stedman in his book, *Body Life*, observes that the apostle Paul devoted his letter to the Ephesians, almost exclusively to the church, its origin, its nature, its function and its essential relationship to the Lord. In this Epistle, the church is referred to as the body of Christ and Jesus Christ is recognized as the head of the church.

Bruce Larson and Ralph Osborne in their co-authored book titled, *The Emerging Church*, dedicate it "to the Lord of the Church and all of His faithful people who are helping Him to create 'the new thing' in our time."

In the very introduction they say,

"We are not talking about renewal. Renewal is a concept foreign to the emerging church. Renewal implies that the Church was once what God intended it to be and that our task is to bring back that golden age. From its earliest beginnings until now, the Church has been in the process of becoming, it shall always be so. If the Church is true to its Lord, it may never properly say that it has 'emerged.' In both the past and the present, the Church is in the process, moving toward a fulfillment of its calling . . ."

They conclude that paragraph of thought asserting that "wherever there are a few individuals willing and ready to be Christ's people in their own situation and place, there the emerging Church is coming into its own . . ."

Dr. Finley Edge in his book, *The Greening of the Church*, reflects optimism and faith titling the opening chapter, "A Time of Hope." He contends, however, that one of the gravest problems confusing professing Christians of our day is that they do not know what it is to be the "people of God" . . . on His terms . . . in His love, enabling them to become meaningfully and personally involved in His ongoing mission in our times.

He quotes Charles Shedd as saying, "The problem is not that the churches are filled with empty pews, but that the pews are filled with empty people."

Says he, "We are simply experiencing a spiritual dearth in the life of the churches . . ." and ". . . one fundamental

aspect of the problem is that a majority of church members have no clear understanding of what it means to be as the People of God. It is my feeling that the average person's understanding of what it means to be a Christian is so shallow and superficial as to constitute a major perversion of the gospel. It is this misunderstanding that is hindering God's efforts to accomplish his purposes in the world today."

Nevertheless he insists that "the renewal of the church ultimately is the work of God, and there is growing evidence that God is at work renewing his Church today . . . We stand at the threshold of advance!"

He concludes, "I have hope for the church because it is already being renewed. A few years ago we could count on the fingers of one hand the churches in which something dynamic and exciting was occurring. Now there are literally thousands of churches . . . giving promise of that which is to come."

With all of this as a backdrop of prophetic revelation and human observations, let us seek to ascertain what is happening to the churches, in the churches, outside of the churches and perhaps in spite of the churches in these passing years.

I.

First, let us take note of what has happened to various bodies especially during the past decade or so.

Recently the Rev. Dean Kelly, a United Methodist minister, currently employed as director for Civil and Religious Liberty by the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, devoted considerable time to research compiling data which resulted in his writing a book titled, *Why Conservative Churches Are Growing*. In it he includes a series of full-page graphs indicating rather consistent patterns of numeric growth of several denominations from 1800 through 1960. He notes, however, that as of about ten

* The Prologue to these reflections on and excerpts from three presentations made by General Secretary Alton L. Wheeler at General Conference in August appeared in the September 15 issue, pages 3 and 4.

years ago, many of what he terms the "mainline churches" have reflected diminishing trends in membership. That led him to ask why, in his words, "the growth of sectarian and theologically conservative religious groups is moving at an amazing clip while there is equally dramatic decline in membership in the mainline churches."

It was his observation that "adherents are swelling those churches (which are more conservative) because they get there what other institutions are unable to provide: a clear sense of life's purpose. Where religion fails to do this, a church — while busying itself with a host of programs — inevitably declines and even dies.

Dean Kelly's research led to his producing a grid setting forth a twelve-point general trend in goals, controls and communication. The first six are set forth as characteristics of the thriving churches in our times, and the last six as characteristics of the churches which are dwindling in number.

These include: (1) Commitment, (2) Discipline, (3) Missionary Zeal, (4) Absolutism, (5) Conformity, (6) Fanaticism, (7) Relativism, (8) Diversity, (9) Dialogue, (10) Lukewarmness, (11) Individualism, and (12) Reserve.

While we will not at this time categorize Seventh Day Baptists, we invite our readers to underline those characteristics which they consider to be descriptive of our denomination at large.

Dean Kelly's conclusion was that "Man is a meaning monger . . . Man is a being who needs to make sense out of experience. It is the task of religion to provide this meaning and purpose, to give character and direction to the forces which influence one's destiny." He further asserts that "what the mainline churches need desperately to do is to return from peripheral concerns and to recover their essential task: providing the meaning that makes life whole." To many of us this includes, in the words of Paul, our "seeking to see things, as it were, from God's point of view" . . . "with our outward lives which men see bringing credit to our Master's name being given spiritual in-

sight and understanding" . . . "so that (we) will always be doing good, kind things for others, while all the time (we) are learning to know God better and better" (Col. 1:9, 10 — Phillips Trans. and the Living Bible). It includes our proclaiming more clearly the gospel centered in Jesus Christ in word, witness and service.

II.

Second, looking forward, as well as around and within, wherein can Seventh Day Baptists as those committed to Christ and His Church, strengthen their lives, mission and witness?

As previously stated, a few months ago a seven-page questionnaire regarding the life and mission of Seventh Day Baptists was drafted and sent out to some 250 persons — approximately 50 each of youths, young adults, laymen, laywomen and clergy. Scores of responses reflected the conviction that our spiritual life, faith and witness will be strengthened (a) to the extent to which individuals in significant numbers outside and inside our churches feel that in the words of Dr. Finley Edge, we know what it is to be the "people of God";

(b) the extent to which we stress the paramount importance of personal commitment of one's life to the Lord Jesus Christ and to His Church;

(c) the extent to which individuals in significant numbers experience Spirit-filled, Spirit-guided and Spirit-empowered lives;

(d) the extent to which, in keeping with the words of a former Commission, we give evidence of comprehending to some considerable extent the substance of "God's mission of the ages . . . and what we as Seventh Day Baptists are doing as participants in God's mission";

(e) the extent to which we seem to be involved meaningfully in mission to the glory of God and to the spiritual benefit of others, with loving regard for the spiritual welfare and destiny of individuals as persons with personalities;

(f) the extent to which, being reconciled to God through Jesus Christ, we look forward to that time when "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ, and

he shall reign forever and ever" (Rev. 11:15b).

In specific, numerous persons responding to the questionnaires, offered numerous ways in which our commitment to Christ and His Church can be further strengthened. These include:

(1) Increased stress on familiarity with the Bible as a "North Star" point of reference giving ourselves and others a sense of direction in life. A significant number asked for in-depth Bible studies being encouraged on personal, one-to-one, family and small group encounter basis, studies designed to give outward as well as inward evidence of affecting one's belief, conduct, attitude and relationship to others as well as to the Lord;

(2) Clearly articulated beliefs stated in "laymen's" terms, expressing deep-seated convictions which affect one's morals, sense of honesty, courtesy, empathy and love in interpersonal relationships in everyday life. (There were no requests for development of a doctrinal catechism, rather for individuals to be challenged to develop and state their own personal beliefs with some evidence of authenticity and conviction);

(3) A more comprehensive preaching and teaching of God's plan of the ages including the past, present, and future with more attention given to eschatology (defined by Webster's dictionary as "belief about or in the end of the world or the last things — as the second coming of Christ, resurrection, Judgment, the new age");

(4) The need most frequently mentioned by those responding to the questionnaire was for more recognition to be made of the importance of Spirit-filled, Spirit-led and Spirit-empowered lives. It is well known that throngs of individuals as well as groups and churches have testified in recent years of experiencing a charismatic awakening. An increasing number of individuals within the ranks of Seventh Day Baptists are attesting with exuberance to having been blessed by such an experience of spiritual renewal. Some are taking their first faltering steps in this recently discovered walk of life. Some indicate that they are convinced of the genuineness of their charismatic bless-

ing which some allude to as a "second baptism," but they want to learn more about its deeper significance and more about where they go from here. Others are curious to know that receiving of the Holy Spirit is all about and are seeking guidance, information and counsel.

As charismatic experiences as well as personal spiritual renewal in form of other manifestations become evident in many lives within our churches, our churches and their pastors are challenged to interpret the work of the Holy Spirit and to deal with and minister to individuals who have been so spiritually curious or blessed. In each local and personal situation, decisions will have to be made as to whether such individuals in quest will receive shepherding assistance within our churches and by our pastors and other teachers, or whether such persons will feel constrained to turn elsewhere to seek help and guidance. It is a personal observation that it is most difficult and apparent if one attempts to interpret or pass judgment on the degree of reality or validity of an experience which he has not had.

III.

In conclusion and in response to the question, "What are our denominational prospects of growth trend during the next decade or score of years?" we would call attention to Dean Kelly's assertion that "Man is a meaning-monger . . . Man is a being who needs to make sense out of experience . . . Man seeks direction in life both so far as his immediate future and his ultimate destiny are concerned . . . Adherents are swelling those churches wherein to their understanding, they are gaining a clear sense of life's purpose" . . . "where a religion fails to do this, while busying itself with a host of programs, it inevitably declines and even dies . . . What the mainline churches need desperately to do is to return from peripheral concerns and to recover their essential task: providing the meaning that makes a people whole."

We would further observe that the church or denomination which would seem to be all things to everyone may become one which in time may mean little

High Schoolers Served This Summer

High school students who served their Seventh Day Baptist church or one of its area units this past summer were recognized at Conference in Milton on the Board of Christian Education program. In 1969-70 the Summer Christian Service Corps decided to discontinue sending high schoolers in the Associational exchange of dedicated workers. The Board of Christian Education was asked to prepare an alternate program for high schoolers in summer service to their church.

In the ERA OF ACTION packet, p. 19, the program is outlined. Various Associations and churches have adapted the program to their needs, although no title has been chosen for the program. Basic to its working is the recognition which the local church or Association gives to high school summer service helpers, though Conference recognition was also planned.

We believe there are more SDB high schoolers who gave some part of their summer in church projects, but the twenty-eight (yes, 28) persons named at Conference on Wednesday morning are a number of which to be proud.

Named and honored with applause were the following youths: (Each of their churches will be given a certificate from the Board of Christian Education which may be used to publicly thank them on behalf of all USA SDB's):

Jean Fetrow and Debbie Michael from

if anything to anyone.

If we are to "press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," we need to have a sense of direction.

We can be "more than conquerors through him who loved us" (Romans 8: 37).

The future of our denominational life mission and witness will be in ratio to the depth of our commitment to Christ and His Church.

the church at Waterford; Cyndi Pearson from Washington; Joanne Barber from Westerly; Randy Kagarise, Cathy Ebersole, Karen Fletcher, Joselyn Fletcher from Salemville; Chuck Clement, Chris Rogers, Vickie Ash, and Tom Goodson from Salem; Loren Ross from Riverside and Salem College; Linda Burdick, Doreen Sanford, Teresa Shaw from Milton; Rachel Drake from Richburg; Mary Jane Curry, Carol Pinder and Susie Pinder from Lost Creek; Terry Sanford from Little Genesee; Terry Trede from Daytona Beach; Barbara Harrison and Barbara Brayman from Ashaway; Chris Matison, Lauri Higgins, and Cindy Pierce from Alfred Station; Jim Gardner from Alfred.

Church leaders who may not have responded to the request for names before Conference may wish to send names of high school summer helpers to the Board now. We will be happy to send a certificate to thank these youthful Christian venturers on behalf of all of us. Most of all, we encourage the local church or Association to encourage, select, train, and involve high school youths in the significant projects of the local church, including the collaboration of all Christian forces in the community. Exciting and creative ventures are being undertaken with and for Christ. High school is an age of venture and experimentation. Involve your high schoolers — and recognize their commitment and efforts.

MEMORY TEXT

"If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit." — Galatians 5:25.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

WESTERLY, R. I.

Two young ladies, Duska Goodson and Faith Oliver, working with project director, Pastor Francis D. Saunders, composed team "Inspiration" as they served the Pawcatuck S.D.B. Church in Westerly, Rhode Island, in dedicated service, the summer of 1973. With a ringing testimony of faith in Jesus Christ they move among the people of the church bringing inspiration and love in

their daily services.

The summer began with concentrated effort in visitation, inviting children to attend D.V.B.S. and witnessing to many of their faith in the Lord. They served at Lewis Camp (Intermediate) being in charge of the devotional life of the camp: morning worship, chapel services, vespers. They also planned the camp fire sessions at the close of each day.

Camp was followed immediately by the D.V.B.S. with a record enrollment of eighty-five children. Their responsibility for the school was the teaching of the Junior Class.

Follow-up visitation was the order of the day for the rest of the summer weeks before they left for evaluation at Milton.

The pastor and members of the Pawcatuck Church will long remember the inspiration which these young ladies brought to our church during their short visit in our midst. They were "Inspiration."

—Rev. Francis Saunders

SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON

for October 20, 1973

FREEDOM AND ITS TEMPTATIONS
Scripture Lesson: Romans 6:15-23

Births

Van Horn.—A daughter, Heather Ruth, to Philip D. and Margaret (Williams) Van Horn of Plainfield, N. J., on September 29, 1973.

Accessions

PAINT ROCK, ALA.

Rev. Leslie Welch, Pastor

By Testimony:

Mark Victor Beebe

By Baptism:

Lily Anna Beebe

Obituaries

BOTTOMS.—Ada Keith was born November 20, 1890, at Harrisville, West Virginia, and died in a Chattanooga, Tennessee, hospital, August 20, 1973.

She grew up in a Methodist home, united with that church, and planned her education toward a life service in religious education. She served for many years as a minister of religious education in Methodist and Presbyterian churches in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Ordinarily spending vacations with her long-

time friend, Conza Meathrell at Berea, W. Va., she became convinced of the Sabbath and baptism, was baptized by Pastor A. T. Bottoms, and continued for some years as a Sabbath-keeping Methodist.

After the death of his first wife, Elder A. T. Bottoms and she were united in marriage, and they taught school at various locations in northern Alabama until his death in 1960.

When the Oakdale Seventh Day Baptist Church was reorganized in July 1946, she became a member and served as deaconess, to which office she had been ordained in the Methodist church, as long as she was able.

Failing health in recent years caused her to enter a Seventh-day Adventist rest home, where it seemed best to her to unite with that church.

During her vacations in earlier years, she had conducted Vacation Bible Schools at Berea, and she will be long remembered for the appreciation of beauty which she instilled in her pupils.

She leaves seven stepchildren: Edna (Mrs. F. O. Sutton); Lillian (Mrs. Kay Bee); Katherine (Mrs. Edward Duitsman); Thomas; Estelle (Mrs. Emil Fernandez); David; and Myra Ann (Mrs. Gilbert Tye).

Farewell services were conducted August 22, 1973, at the Seventh Day Baptist Church at Paint Rock, Alabama, by Pastors C. A. Beebe and L. A. Welch, in accordance with plans that she had made some years previous, and burial was in the Oakdale (Bottoms) Cemetery near Athens, Alabama.

—C. A. B.

LOOFBORO.—Jean Elizabeth, daughter of the late Rev. Eli F. and Mary Alice (St. John) Loofboro, was born March 3, 1921, in Little Genesee, N. Y., and died near Bradford, Pa., on July 28, 1973, the victim of a traffic accident.

Jean was graduated from Salem College and was employed by Cottrell Division of Harris Intertype of Pawcatuck, Conn., for several years before coming to Alfred. While living in Westerly, she was a member of the Pawcatuck Seventh Day Baptist Church, and was active in the affairs of the parish.

After coming to Alfred Miss Loofboro was secretary to President M. Ellis Drake and administrative assistant to President Leland Miles. She was a member of the American Association of University Women and the Alfred Seventh Day Baptist Church, of which she was church clerk.

Surviving are three brothers: Norman of Pawcatuck, Conn.; Kenneth of Cleveland, Ohio; and John of Fort Pierce, Fla.; three sisters, Mrs. Janette Rogers of Plainfield, N. J.; Mrs. Marguerite Dawson of Gales Ferry, Conn.; and Mrs. Virginia Drake of Groton, Conn.

Funeral services were held, August 1, in the Harvey Buckler Funeral Home, Westerly, R.I., the Rev. Francis D. Saunders officiating. Burial was in River Bend Cemetery, Westerly.

—R. G. J.



The realist would howl, "Help, save me, I'm falling!" And as he whistled down the pessimist might moan, "I'm dead already."

But you could say that the optimist will hit harder. He isn't expecting it.

Most people are a mixture of the moods. Sometimes we are optimistic. Sometimes pessimistic. And occasionally realistic. We are cheerfully inconsistent, too.

The average man insures his car, his home, even his life. But talk to him about eternity and his soul. He is apt to say, "I haven't done anything wrong. I'm OK yet; nothing has happened so far."

He seems to forget that "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Nor does he recall St. Paul's exhortation, "behold, now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation."

Perhaps he does remember Jesus' words, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," or perhaps "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish," but he never does anything. He just floats on down.

And you're like him?

Better pay attention. Or you'll hit awfully hard.



ANITA DAVIS HARRIS
1973 ROBE OF ACHIEVEMENT

**THE
SABBATH
RECORDER**