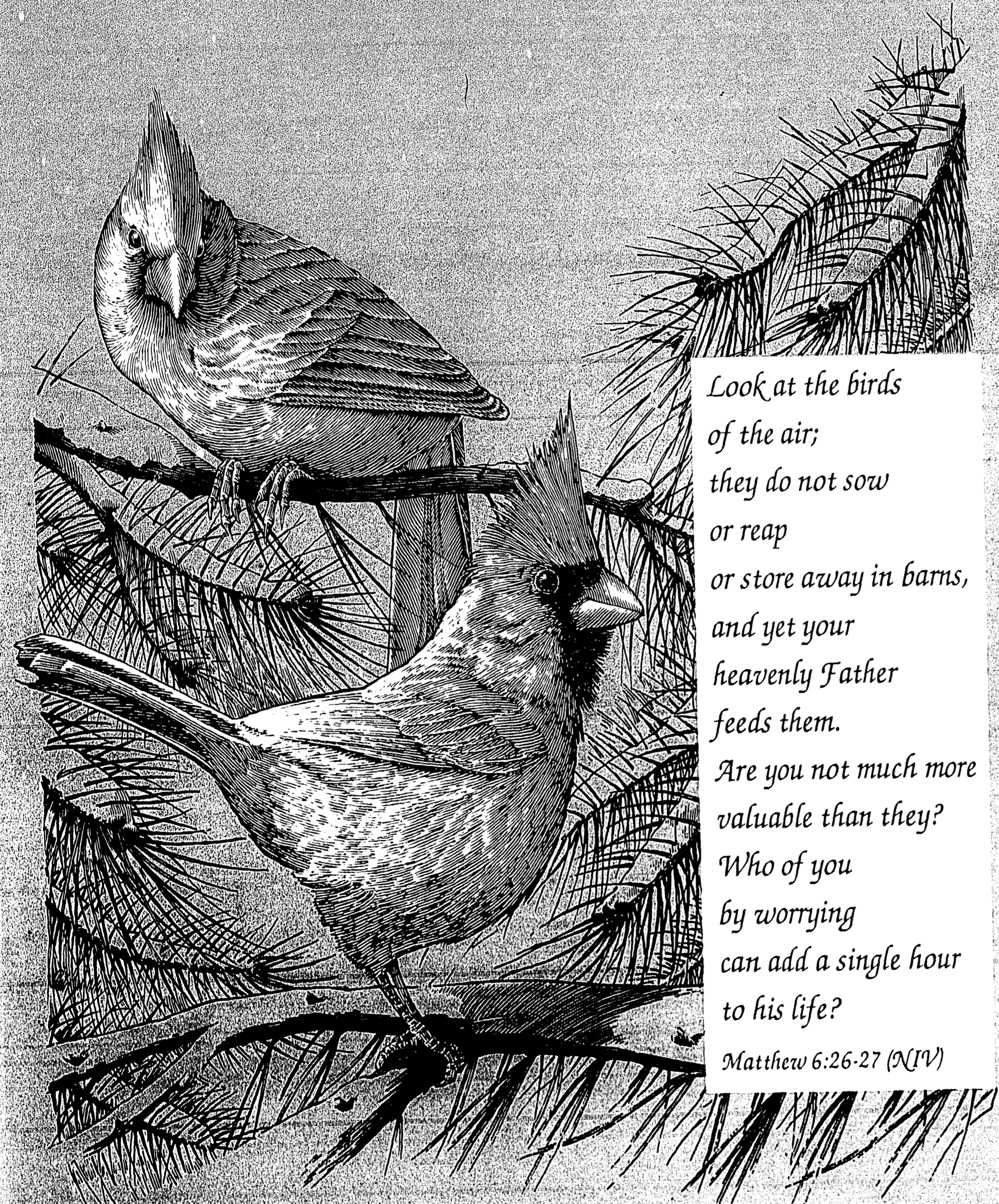


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*Look at the birds  
of the air;  
they do not sow  
or reap  
or store away in barns,  
and yet your  
heavenly Father  
feeds them.*

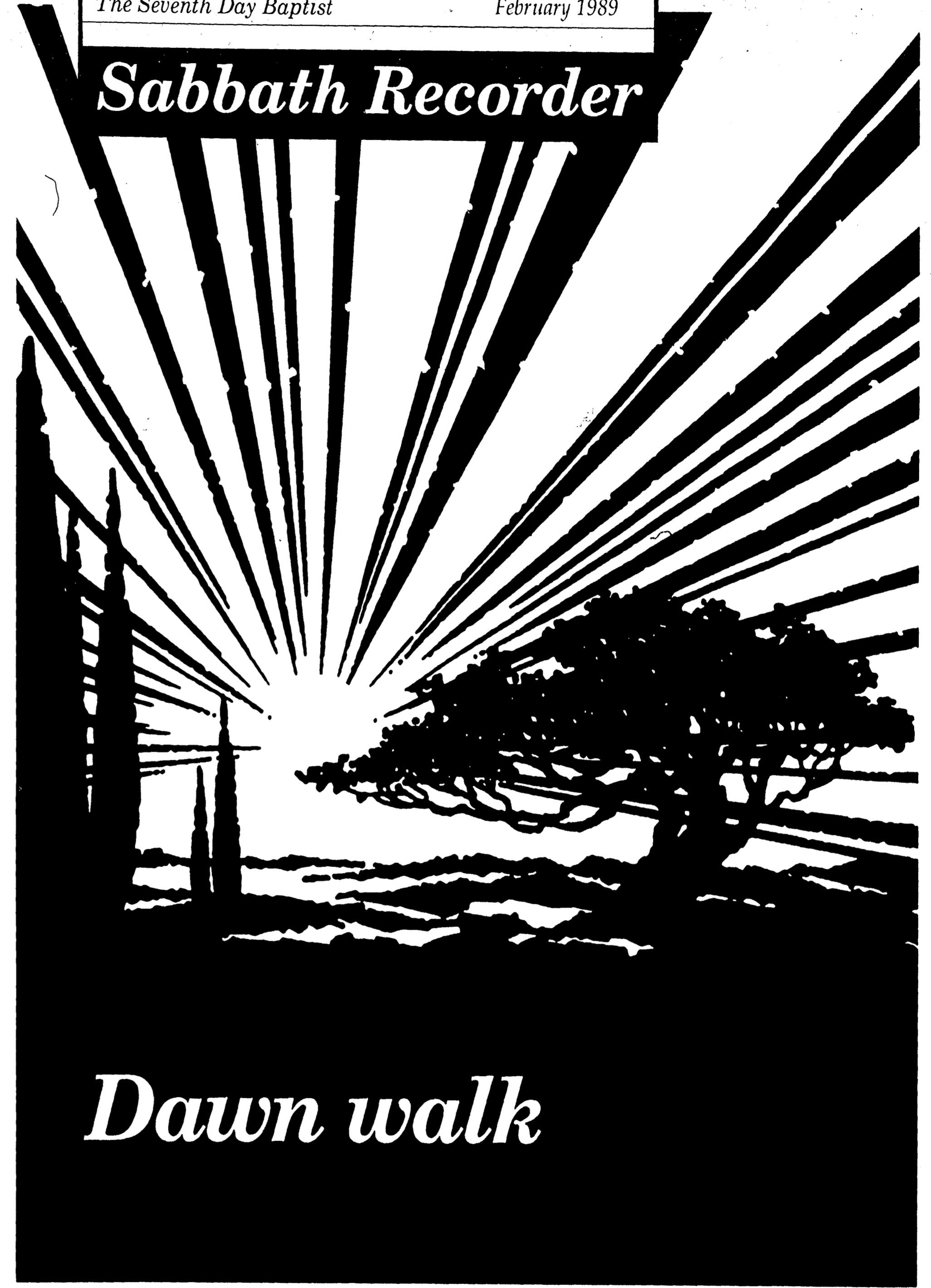
*Are you not much more  
valuable than they?  
Who of you  
by worrying  
can add a single hour  
to his life?*

*Matthew 6:26-27 (NIV)*

The Seventh Day Baptist

February 1989

## *Sabbath Recorder*



## *Dawn walk*

## Update on Jamaica

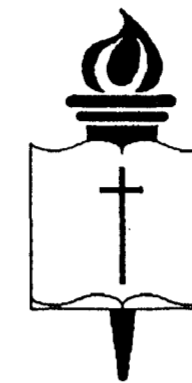


One of the churches severely damaged in last September's hurricane in Jamaica is located at Luna, St. Mary, in the mountains north of Kingston. It is situated on a hilltop with an outstanding view. But this left it open to the full fury of the wind.

These two pictures show that the roof and support beams were destroyed and items within damaged by wind and water. The walls and most of the windows survived and will continue to enclose the congregation as the house of worship is renewed. Gifts designated for Jamaican Relief will be sent to help aid the Luna, and other churches, thus damaged in the storm. **SR**



# The Sabbath Recorder



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A Seventh Day Baptist publication

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## Who are Seventh Day Baptists?

If you've never read *The Sabbath Recorder* before, you might be wondering who Seventh Day Baptists are. Like other Baptists, Seventh Day Baptists believe in...  
the saving love of Jesus Christ...  
the Bible as the inspired word of God and a record of God's will for man. We use the Bible as our authority both for our faith and our daily conduct.  
We believe in freedom of thought and the congregational form of church government. That means that every member of the church has the right to participate in the decision making process of the church.

#### The seventh day

God commanded that the seventh day (Saturday) be kept holy. Jesus showed that he agreed by keeping it as a day of worship. We observe the seventh day of the week (Saturday) as God's Holy Day as an act of loving obedience, and not as a means of salvation—salvation is the free gift of God through Jesus Christ.

It is the joy of the Sabbath that makes Seventh Day Baptists just a little bit different. If you would like more information about Seventh Day Baptists, write: Seventh Day Baptist Center, 3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678

## Your place and mine

by Juanita Ogden  
Lambeth

**A** love offering had just been announced in church this particular Sabbath morning. This money would help provide food baskets, flowers and so on. Various ones, and especially children began their march down the aisle toward the front of the auditorium. Here and there, children stopped to take an offering from an adult member. One donor, especially, caught my eye. He was a small boy who held his coins up high and dropped them into the offering plate one by one, evidently enjoying every minute of this activity. As he started back up the aisle toward his seat, he suddenly hesitated and appeared worried and confused.

"He lost his place," whispered a young girl with real sympathy in her voice. Then, the little boy saw her... the one who made every-

***Confusion and unhappiness is one of the direct results of not having a special place. To occupy a certain seat each week is not enough. Have you found your place in the scheme of things?***

thing right in his life! The sad face that had been ready for tears, brightened up instantly. What a difference! It was as if the sun came out after a brief shower. The child smiled broadly as he pushed in beside his mother. The same change can be seen when your place is found!

I thought about this incident long after I pointed my car in the direction of home. "He lost his place" could very well be spoken about many older people. Confusion and unhappiness is one of the direct results of not having a special place. To occupy a certain seat each week is not enough. Have you found your place in the scheme of things?

Christ, our example, always had a place. His schedule was quite a heavy one—from Tyre and Sidon to Galilee, and then to Judea. Later, he made his final trip to Jerusalem in time to fulfill a prophecy concerning him. A work has been appointed for everyone who has become a partaker of his grace. John the Baptist performed no miracle, yet God had a special work for him to do. It was a work of witnessing for our Saviour. We have real proof that he fulfilled it in the most noble way.

God has plans for you, too. The apostles had their places. Paul, for instance, found his place in a friendly church, in a school building, the common market place,

and the hillside near the river. A divided life was not for Paul. Neither should it be for modern Israelites. We, too, must find our place. True wisdom will direct us to the side of our loving master. Like Noah, we will be able to live a good life when so many of those around us are wicked. When we read Genesis 6:9, we find out how Noah was able to accomplish this great task. Noah walked with God, believed him, and trusted him each day to lead him in making the right choices.

Never before has there been a greater need for humans to become involved ... in their own ways, with whatever talents they possess, to help meet a great need. Those who concern themselves with the welfare of others find a gladness that is unknown to the self-centered. Albert Schweitzer once said this, "I know not what your destiny will be, but one thing I know: those among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve others."

A difference will be seen in our lives as surely as that seen in the little boy who spotted his mother. Joy, relief, and renewed energy will manifest itself. True security will be the biggest boon. Oliver Wendell Holmes said it so well when he gave us this: "To reach the port of heaven we must sail, sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it... but we

must sail, not drift or lie at anchor."

Young people, prepare for a place in God's work; these are very serious times. It will not be said, "Well done, thou great and brilliant servant," but "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Can we depend on Christ to help us make the right decision? You can be sure of it! Read Malachi 3:17 which says, "They shall be mine saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Do you think that special work goes only to special people? Not at all! In fact, there is a certain work that only you can do; something the world needs which you and only you can do. Search for it. Be on the lookout for this important piece of work. Everybody you know will be a winner! **SR**

***Those who concern themselves with the welfare of others find a gladness that is unknown to the self-centered.***

## Dawn walk

by John Laughlin

"If I say, 'Let only darkness cover me, and the light about me be night,' even the darkness is not dark to thee, the night is bright as the day; for darkness is as light with thee" (Psalm 139:11-12).



**I**t was around 6 a.m. and Pearl and I were taking our usual morning walk. I was in my thoughts and she was in hers. From time to time we talked about this subject or that and then we lapsed into silence—deep into our own contemplations. We rarely share these thoughts with each other, not because they are secretive but because they are private experiences that are difficult to put into words. On returning from this particular walk, I felt the need to capture some of those musings and share them.

The morning was cold and frost was in the air. As we began, the sky was dark and the street lights were still on. After about two miles, dawn appeared. The gray clouds were torn apart and streaked with wide bands of deep rose and along a narrow strip near the horizon, a pale white and yellow burst of light mesmerized me and fixed my thoughts on heaven. I no longer found myself depressed, as I had been at the start of the walk. Rather, I was transfixed—lifted above my puny worries and self-doubts and reminded of my innate potential that cannot be killed or destroyed no matter what happens. It can go unrealized and lie dormant, but as a creature of God, it can never be killed.

One message that came to me on this walk stood out—it came in an image rather than a voice. It was formed in unrecognizable shapes like an abstract work of

art whose meaning suddenly bursts through to comprehension. You grasp what it means but are left unable to fully convey it to others. As a partially recalled image can hold the meaning of an entire dream, so I felt this abstraction was a part of some inner truth of which I was capable of knowing only a fraction. I was to stop denying my creative instincts and each day find some way, no matter how small or insignificant, to allow for some creativity in my life. Was I so unaware of what price I was already paying for such neglect—a neglect that left my soul cut off from this elemental force in nature that connects me directly to God? Each day I was to pay attention to this need and allow its expression through writing, drawing, music, praying, volunteering, or dozens of other ways I had not yet thought of. Nor was I to confuse, as I so often do, creativity with productivity or to dwell on its public merits. Creativity is in essence a spiritual process that is the natural extension of God, who is creativity.

This compelling spiritual awakening quickly left me as daybreak disappeared behind a row of close-growing trees that shut out the first light of day and cast me back into darkness. My thoughts followed suit and became an obsession with how unproductive my life seemed to me then. This was an old obsession that descends upon me indiscriminately. I argued back, reciting in vain my

usual litany of replies to ward off this attack. Again they failed for I mistook darkness for what it was not. Sin and evil in this form of anxiety and self-doubt choose their own time and place and God inhabits the darkest recesses of our lives. Willpower, of itself, is not enough. To create is to respond to a more whole life, one where self-doubts and uncertainty coexist with clear vision and predictability. If faith and trust in God imply uncertainty and shadows then my life was nearly tyrannized by idols of order and control. For a moment I drew comfort in the image of Enoch: "And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him" (Genesis 5:24).

To trust in my creative urges would mean to rely more on instinct and intuition. It would mean that I would have to loose

***I was transfixed—lifted above my puny worries and self-doubts and reminded of my innate potential that cannot be killed or destroyed...***

**It is only in such peaceful surroundings that I am able to hear and feel these deep inner stirrings and where my most important thoughts can gurgle up to consciousness.**

my steel grip and even with one fingertip reach across to the outstretched hand of God to pass on to him these worries. At the other side of creativity lies insanity—where you sink into depravity from which there is no return.

Now I came out of the darkness to gaze upon a fallow field. The field was edged with trees high enough to poke through the dimness where their narrow tips, like cathedral spires, alighted all about them in yellow, purple and orange.

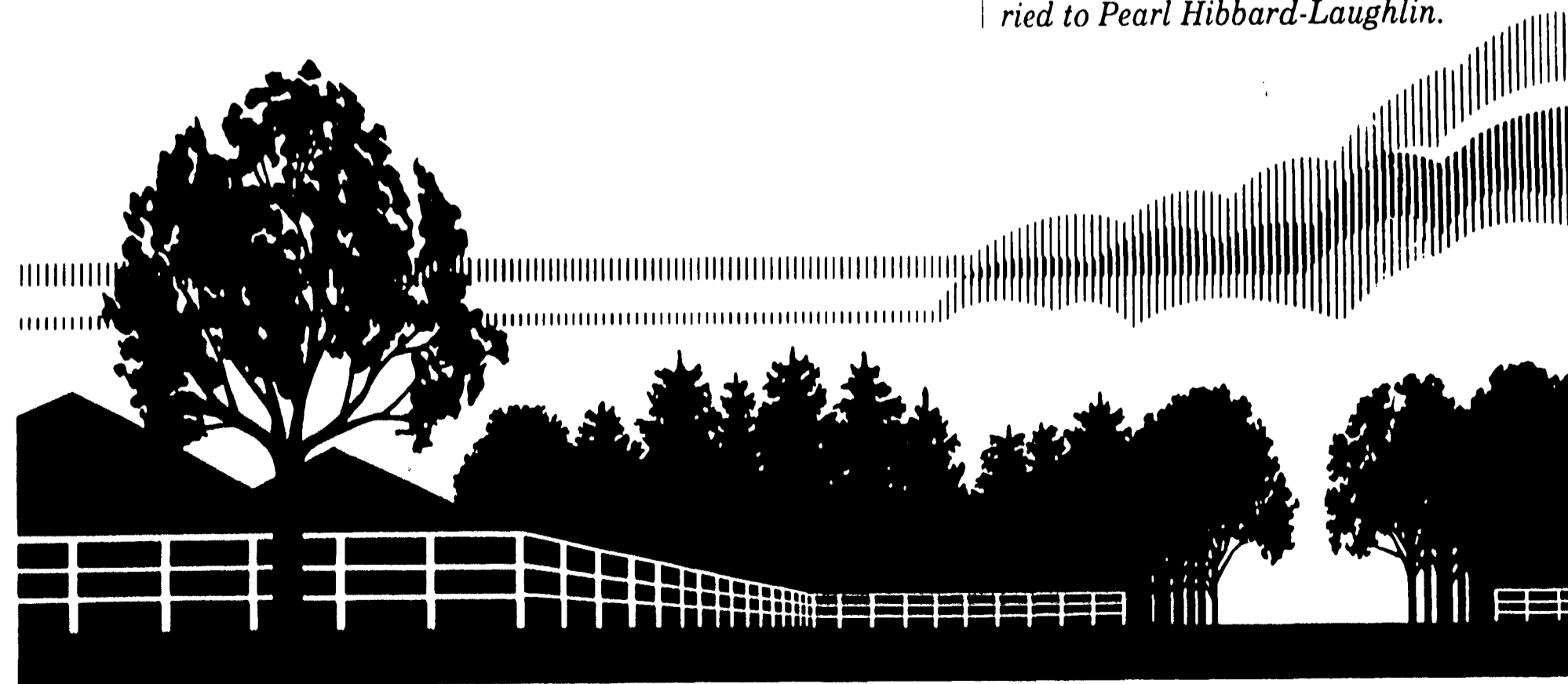
If each day we could open our souls to such an exultation of nature, we would find ourselves perfectly centered in God without the need for laws to tell us what is right, or good, or holy. Being so connected, we would be free from the headaches that plague us and muddle our thinking as we try to distinguish between what is right and what is evil rationalized as right.

It is only in such peaceful surroundings that I am able to hear and feel these deep inner stirrings and where my most important

thoughts can gurgle up to consciousness. Inner harmony cannot flourish in the midst of tyranny which seems to make up so much of the daily bread we live on. That tyranny can be blasting music, traffic jams, gossip news stories, the desperate need for possessions, the maddening rush through each day that leaves our bodies and souls exhausted and searching for relief in food and drink, inane TV shows, and finally an uneasy sleep.

It is not by accident that beauty and creation are found in tandem. We do not create beauty. Beauty appears in our midst spontaneously. Color, sound, movement and shape live among us like friendly ghosts called forth from the other side—riding high on invisible currents. God, through beauty, seeks out his temple of worshippers where souls lie prone praying for a re-vision and another chance at prophecy. **SR**

*John Laughlin is a licensed clinical psychiatric social worker and is Assistant Director of VESTA Foundation. He is a member of the Central Seventh Day Baptist Church in Maryland. He is married to Pearl Hibbard-Laughlin.*



## Share the joy of repentance

by Luan Ellis

*"Even so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety and nine righteous persons who need no repentance" (Luke 15:7 RSV).*

This month, let's look at the parable of the lost sheep found in Luke 15:1-7.

I remember in Freshman Lit, reading stories or books and the professor expecting us to find the hidden meanings. What did the writer really mean when he said "She walked gingerly across the street?" How am I supposed to know? If the author wanted me to find a deeper meaning, why did he not just come right out and write it that way? I guess that is why I teach Math instead of English.

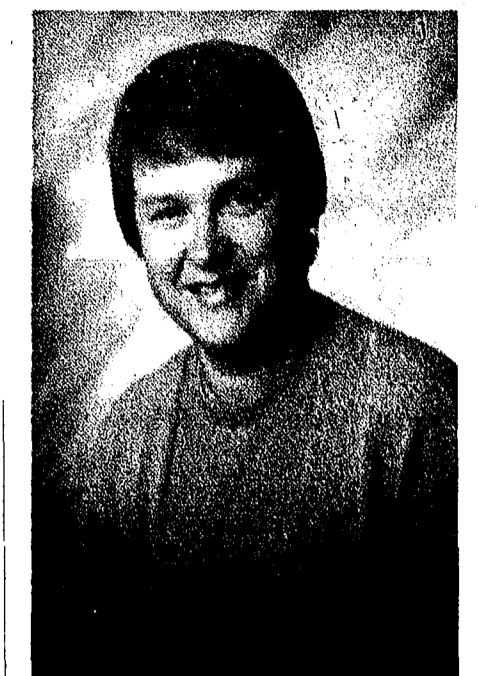
The parable of the lost sheep is a story told by Jesus. We are supposed to look for the hidden meaning. With Jesus' stories it is not hard for me to find that hidden meaning. Maybe it is because the stories have been around for a long time and many people have told me what they think the stories mean. Maybe it is because Christ's parables have a simple message. He wanted everyone to know what he meant, so he made them easy to understand.

Parables make us think more about their meaning. If Christ had just told the story straight, we would not consider the meaning as much as we do when we have to reason it out.

Well, back to the parable. I would like to meet those 90 and nine that need no repentance. They must be unusual people. Have you heard these expressions lately? "I have only made one mistake in my life—that was when I thought I was wrong, but I was not." "Those who think they know it all upset those of us who do." "I am not conceited. I am perfect."

I hope our churches are not full of the 90 and nine. Have you ever had someone tell you that they would not go to church because they feel the church is full of sanctimonious people? We need to let them know that the church is a haven for all the lost. The joy of repentance is great. How can you keep your sins bottled up inside of you? The Lord is there to grant us forgiveness. Through the church, we are supported by loved ones that are concerned. The Lord is the Good Shepherd, the church is his flock. No matter how insignificant we feel that we are, there will be great joy in heaven in our repentance. What joy and relief we feel when we know God has forgiven us!

Let us make sure that we are not one of the 90 and nine and that we look after those lost sheep. God will give us great joy that we may share with all. **SR**



General Conference President  
Luan Ellis

## "Your young men shall see visions..."

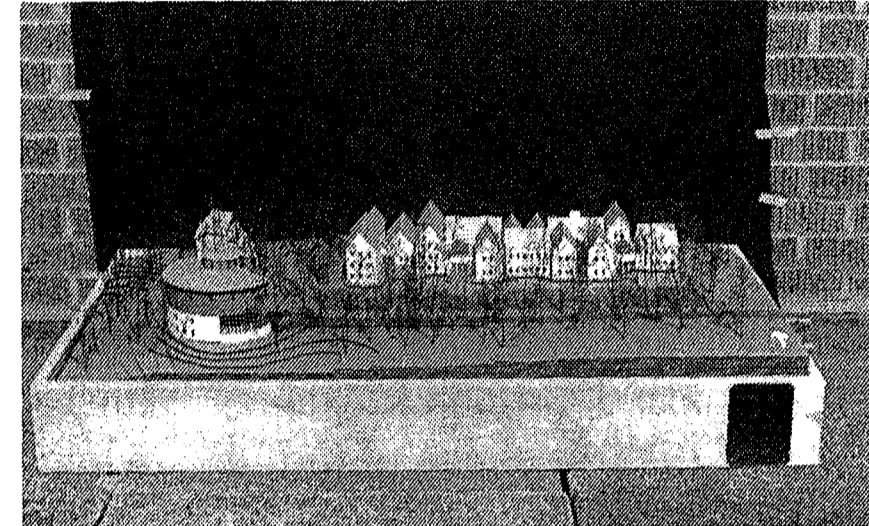
by Dale D. Thorngate

Some time ago, a young man called the SDB Center to ask me if he might create an architectural design for an enlarged SDB Center. He was a junior architecture student and a member of our church in Houston, Texas. I was intrigued by the idea. A few months later, after his necessary correspondence with Rock County and City of Janesville offices to get required regulations, specifications, etc., Morgan Shepard made a visit to the Center to examine the site and interview staff members about the needs of each department for expanded space in the event that the denomination would double or quadruple in size.

Morgan's significant assessment upon completion of that interview process was, "It sure is hard for these people to think bigger!" I thought of a familiar proverb: "Where there is no vision, the people perish." I also thought of Joel's prophecy repeated in Acts: "Your young men shall see visions; your old men will dream dreams."

Last August a large package arrived at the Center: Morgan Shepard's drawings of a new Center campus, a bound copy of his completed thesis, and photos of the model he had made of the site and buildings. It is a unique vision—an inspiring dream. I share some of it here with the challenge to each Seventh Day Baptist to seek God's leading in the area of your special gifts—to dream dreams, to see visions, to think bigger. I salute you, Morgan!

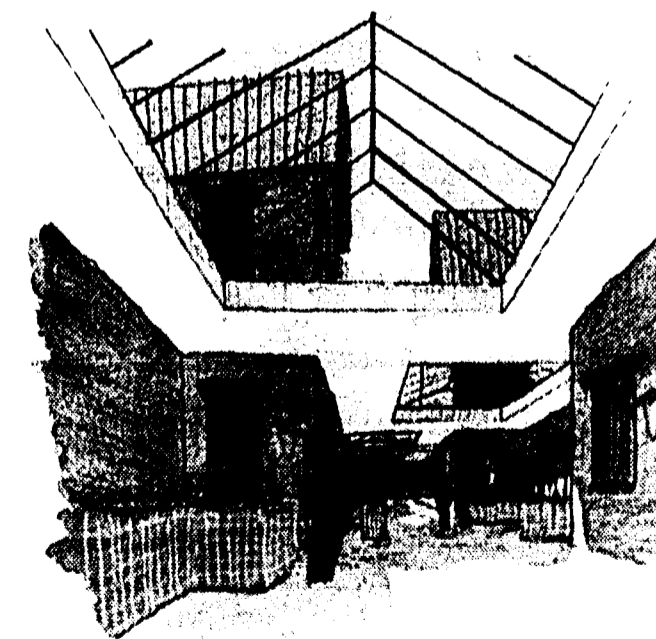
Morgan Shepard received a Bachelor of Architecture degree last May from Texas Tech University and has since completed officer training at the Naval Academy in Newport, Rhode Island. He is stationed at China Lake Naval Air Station in California.



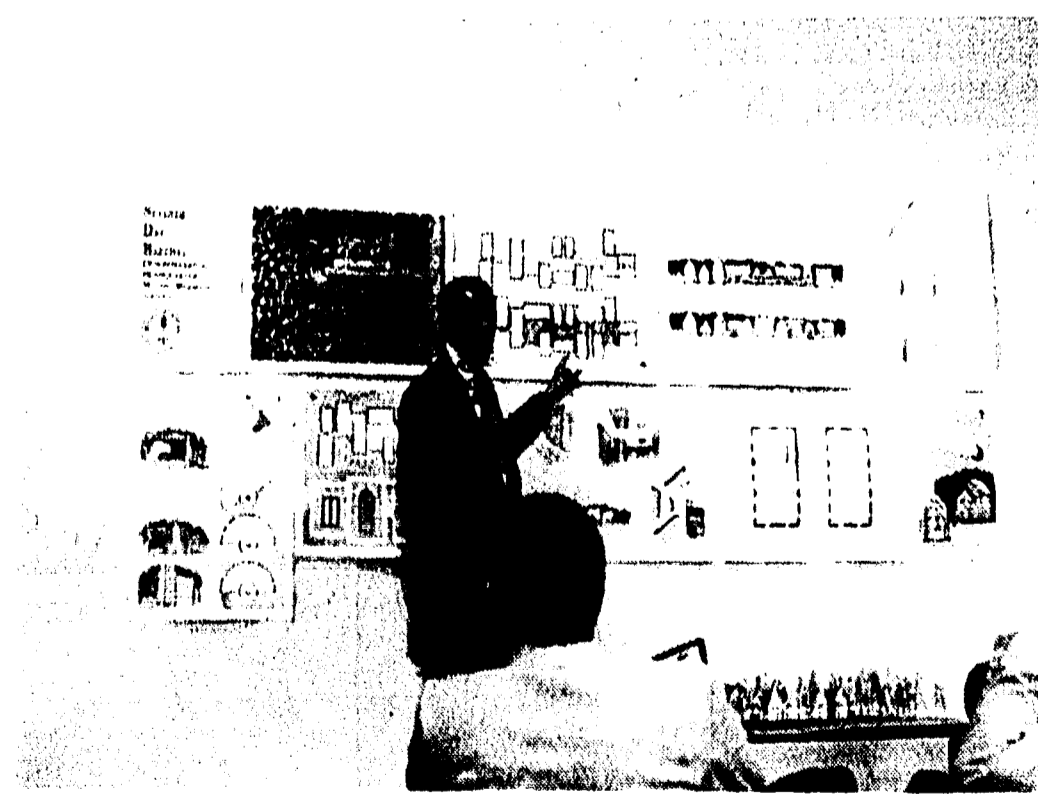
Situated in "a rural setting with trees and nature surrounding the entire complex," Shepard's model creates a retreat atmosphere for staff and visitors using the circular library-museum building (front left) at the end of the entry drive, the more secluded chapel of simple wood and glass (back left) and the main building (center right).



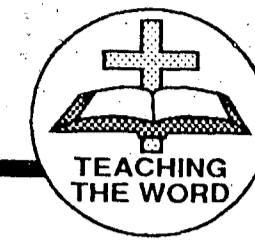
The main building housing administrative offices, classroom/meeting rooms, and guest quarters including sleeping and dining facilities, is designed with a "clustered look" and "simple gabled forms" intended to create "a typical office environment but have the atmosphere of a religious organization."



Atrium areas with open skylights connect the office complex "so that each department or office is an entity unto itself but still part of the whole...because agencies need to have their individual identity but also need to relate to each other."



Morgan Shepard presenting his architectural design for a Seventh Day Baptist National Headquarters to the College of Architecture faculty at Texas Tech University in Lubbock last May.



## NET Ambassadorship: me, an evangelist?

Being "ourselves" comes naturally. Yet, being ourselves is always an ever-changing process. Life brings changing relationships: our son is ill; our parents die; our jobs change; we move to another house or even another state. "Ourselves" are always in a state of change, but God's love hold us in a constant relationship to him and those who seek him.

We tend *not* to do what we *do not* find natural and comfortable. We frequently overlook the opportunity to share our faith because we are uncomfortable attempting to imitate the ways of others. If we know "who we are," which we began to examine in the *Discipleship* experience, and "where we are," which we examined in the *Churchmanship* phase, then we will be ready to fish a little deeper within ourselves and venture outside to meet others who seek God. These first steps prepare us to answer the question "How do I share the Gospel message?"

Just as the fisherman knows that certain equipment and knowledge will be required to be successful, so the NET experience is intended to prepare the church member for evangelism. Remember, the fisherman must enter the environment of the fish in order to make contact. We now prepare ourselves to carry the message of Jesus Christ to others.

The *Ambassadorship* phase of the NET experience will focus on what many have called practical evangelism:

First—by discovering who we are in relationship to God and his Christ

and to fellow covenant members, the church membership, who share our journey through life;

Second—by witnessing to some other person about our own experience with God and his living Word, Jesus Christ;

Third—by helping another person to discover who he or she is "in Christ" and to find his or her place in the covenant community, the local Seventh Day Baptist Church.

As you have discovered, the NET experience is not completed when the course is completed. Rather as the seed is planted within the individual and within the local group, it grows, bearing fruit. "For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps'" (John 4:37).

Conference President Luan Ellis has invited us to Share the Joy of our Christian experience. Ambassadorship, the third and final phase of the Natural Evangelism Training experience, has been printed and mailed to subscribing pastors and church leaders to assist them in training their people to Share the Joy. If your church wishes to subscribe, please contact the Seventh Day Baptist Board of Christian Education, P.O. Box 115, Alfred Station, New York 14803, for a free brochure, sample page and order blank. **SR**

*...as the seed is planted within the individual and within the local group, it grows, bearing fruit. "For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps'" (John 4:37).*



## RELIGION IN THE NEWS

### Church members primary source of aid

More than 88 billion dollars in voluntary aid annually comes from individual contributions to local churches. That is the finding of a study conducted by a coalition of 650 philanthropic organizations.

Conducting the first study of its kind, Virginia Hodgkinson said, "Even we were amazed at the great variety of programs supported by religious institutions, both in their local neighborhoods and abroad."

The report, released by Independent Sector, shows that nearly half of the 41.4 billion dollars contributed by individuals to their churches went to health, welfare, educational, and other public benefit programs.

Despite media publicity for electronic evangelists, results show that only about four percent of Americans contribute to television evangelism. Independent Sector President Brian O'Connell said that "The negative publicity tends to give the impression that a sizable amount of money is going to them, but it is minuscule when compared to the amount of money going to local congregations."

### American Baptists stay in NCC

The General Board of the American Baptist Churches has reaffirmed the denomination's membership in the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches, but it also voted to become an official observer denomination to the National Association of Evangelicals.

The decision was the result of efforts on the part of some American Baptists to withdraw from the NCC and the WCC in favor of membership in the National Association of Evangelicals.

### Bakker is back: pleas for funds

With six stations carrying the broadcasts, television evangelist Jim Bakker appealed for financial support to continue his new show. Bakker told his viewers that the Heritage USA empire would someday be restored to the PTL membership.

The broadcasts originated in the living room of the Bakker's home in Pineville, North Carolina, a home loaned to them by followers.

Bakker still faces charges of diverting \$4 million in PTL money to his own benefit.

### Top religion stories: scandal and Soviet changes

Among the leading news stories of 1988, the Associated Press named the scandals of TV evangelists and new openness to religion in the Soviet Union. Other leading stories included protests over "The Last Temptation of Christ" and the doubts raised about the authenticity of the "Shroud of Turin."

The 1988 TV scandal centered on Jimmy Swaggart following the 1987 downfall of Jim Bakker.

The historic changes in the religious climate of the Soviet Union, known as glasnost, seemed to be the story with the most long-term promise for religious progress in the country. The Soviet Union has opened new doors to importation of Bibles and has promised legal action to assure basic religious freedoms.

### Study why pastors fail

A study by the Southern Baptist Convention of reasons for pastoral failure shows that poor communication and perceptions of pastoral immorality are among leading causes for separations. Such firings of pastors are shown to be up by 31 percent over a similar survey in 1984. Other stated reasons for dissatisfaction include reasons best defined as personality clashes and power struggles.

A "lack of communication" between the pastor and leading laymen was cited in 13.4 percent of all firings. Smith noted that both sides were usually guilty of poor communication, and he noted a lack of arrangements to deal promptly with conflict.

## A letter from West Germany

Dear Seventh Day Baptist Friends:

Many thanks to you and all brethren who helped us during the time of conference in Salem, West Virginia. We never will forget the hearty welcome we found everywhere and your gracious hospitality. Last but not least, God's blessing received by the friendliness of so many Seventh Day Baptists during our stay in Salem. Please give our thanks to all persons concerned—so to Marie and Doyle Zwiebel, Clayton Pinder, Dr. Herbert E. Saunders and his family, etc. and to the complete Handbell choir! and so on.

Now we know that we took much too few pictures; so we looked forward to the *Sabbath Recorder* with special interest.

People in Europe are living in a memorable time. For more than 43 years there has been peace in Germany, the longest period without any fight or struggle since foundation of the German nation in 1871. It is a peace without any contract in a shrunk country moreover divided in two parts.

This peace was an extremely expensive purchase because 55 million human beings were killed and 22 million people lost their fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters or were looking for them. Their names are noted down on index cards gathered and paradoxically stored in barracks in Munique.

Peace in Germany after capitulation in May, 1945, never has been a state of safety. During all the time political events could have started another way in or around Germany or in Europe, for example:

- the blockade of Berlin
- the revolt of working population in East Berlin some years ago.

- rebellions in Poland and Hungaria
- construction of the wall through Germany
- invasion of the Russians in Czechoslovakia
- even the Cuba crisis could have torn both parts of Germany into the swirl.

The fact that these crises at the most resulted in deepening of the split between the eastern and the western world, but did not lead into a war, we consider as the Lord's special blessings. We all prefer better to live separated than to die one beside the other. The western Alliance and the offered reconciliation of the East may have the effect of prolongation to the period of peace for all the world. For a future in this sense let us together pray to our merciful Father in Heaven.

With best regards, yours in His love,

Lorenz and Elizabeth Bruhn

Letter from:  
Lorenz Bruhn  
2000 Hamburg 61  
Ordulfstrabe 50

**Now we know that we took much too few pictures; so we looked forward to the *Sabbath Recorder* with special interest.**

Coming next month!

### Special issue of *The Sabbath Recorder*

designed for use with new contacts

Features personal stories of three new Seventh Day Baptists, the new Statement of Belief and Historical Sketch. Extra copies available upon request.

Plan to share your copy with a friend!



# the BEACON

Produced by the Youth Committee of the Board of Christian Education  
For and by members of the SDB Youth Fellowship February, 1989

## Texarkana, Arkansas, youth fellowship

The Texarkana Seventh Day Baptist Youth Fellowship has been busy since General Conference! Around one-half of the group was able to go to Pre-Con and Conference this year, and they brought back the excitement to Texarkana.

The group has been meeting regularly since Conference. At each meeting the group discusses business and then they play "Dragon Raid"—a fantasy/adventure game which stresses Scripture memorization and helps the group to develop their knowledge of and apply Scripture to their lives.

The group has also been busy working on a Christmas musical (which will have been presented by the time you read this) called "It's the Lord's Thing." They are looking forward to sharing this with their church to help celebrate the season.

The group held a seminar dealing with goal-setting and growth in November. It was led by the Director of Youth Ministry, Matt Olson. Almost

everybody attended and it went very well.

The Texarkana Y.F. held a "Clothing Raid" early in December. The members formed teams and went to each church member's house to collect clothing which was no longer needed. The clothing collected was then given to the Salvation Army. The group had a great time and got to provide a service for their community as well!

The Texarkana Y.F. has had a great year so far. Much of the credit goes to their leaders, Dan and Dawn Richards. Everybody is looking forward to the months ahead as they continue to learn about and serve their Lord.

### DIRECTOR'S DITTY

Hello! Another month gone by and here I am again, facing the computer, trying to think of something life-changing to write about. Needless to say, I'm not having much luck! In fact, I'm suffering from the much-dreaded "writer's block."

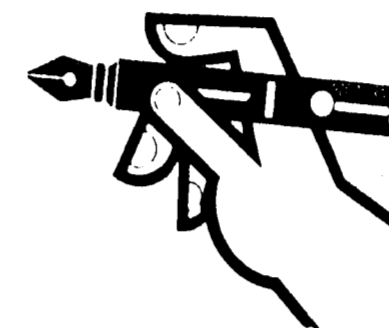
Somehow, February does this to me. There isn't much in the way of holidays (except Valentine's Day, which is an excuse for the greeting-card companies to make big bucks). The days are short, cold, and snowy, with no relief in sight. The school year is dragging at this point. I could go on and on.

I suppose a lot of people are depressed during this month. So maybe I can help by not letting this month get me down. Perhaps by facing February with a reasonably upbeat attitude, I can help pull somebody else out of the "winter blahs." Well, there's my challenge to myself and to you this month. Try not to let February affect your attitude. Do something to cheer somebody else up. Who knows? Maybe February might not seem so bad after all!

### Pen-pal possibilities

If you would like to have a pen-pal from a foreign country, here's your chance! Al Paypa is the National Youth Worker for the Philippine Seventh Day Baptist Convention. You may contact him by writing to the following address:

Al B. Paypa  
Seventh Day Baptist  
P.O. Box 940  
Cebu City, Cebu  
Philippines 6000



Read: 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Memorize: 2 Corinthians 4:18

This is a good time to think about our renewal in Christ. Most of us could use some "inward renewal" at this time of the year. This passage tells us how we might renew our spirit and better face the future.

By "fixing our eyes on what is unseen" (verse 18), that is, the eternal things, we can realize that our time here on earth is only temporary. Even though we face trouble here on earth, we know that there is something better for us farther on.

So don't lose heart during this month! Fix your eyes upon Christ, and look forward to an eternal glory which far outweighs our "light and momentary troubles."

### BOOK REVIEW

Book Review—*Group Growers* from the Editors of Group Publishing

*Group Growers* is the latest addition to the Seventh Day Baptist Board of Christian Education Youth Fellowship library. Based on the title, you might think that this book is about growth. That would be a good guess, but only partly correct. There are a few ideas for increasing attendance, but no strategy for growth.

The book contains 183 creative friendship activities, discussion starters, affirmations and attendance

builders for youth groups. As usual, the book contains some first-rate ideas for use in local youth fellowships. Some of the ideas have been printed in other books, but there are many new activities as well.

This would be a great book for any youth fellowship looking for some ways to spice up their meetings. It may be borrowed from the Board of Christian Education for up to one month. If you would like to borrow the book, please write to the Director of Youth Ministry at: 925 Maybelle NE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503, or give him a call at (616) 454-0380.





## Take time to love

**We often, in our pursuit of what we desire to "give" to our loved ones, misplace priorities.**

Dear Ones All,

Here we are again at that month with all those holidays in it. It seems like I have written you quite a number of Valentines, but in reality this is only the fourth, as this "thing" we have going started in August of 1985. Nevertheless, it becomes more and more difficult to come up with a new approach each year. I was absolutely delighted when a recent visitor asked me if I had decided on a focus for this letter and, since I had not, produced the little devotional booklet, *Our Daily Bread*, with a story that really hit the mark. The page was written by a father about his birthday. That does not sound too much like Valentines Day, but keep reading.

As the father sat at his desk working, his small son approached saying mother had told him that this day was his father's 55th birthday and so, as a present, he was going to give Daddy 55 kisses and proceeded to get quite a few delivered before the father told him that he did not have time now, he was very busy. To the father's credit, he did note that the child's previously shining face took on a very sad appearance. Be that as it may, he returned to his work and kept at it until it was finished. When the desk was cleared, he called to the son in passing and asked for the remainder of the gift, but either the child did not hear or no longer felt his gift was acceptable.

Grown-ups are sometimes afflicted with hindsight and the father started to question if the work had truly been so important that it could not have waited for the rest of the sticky kisses, for something had gone out of the relationship that night. Soon after, the child was killed in an accident and now, not only did the father have his horrible crushing grief, but the knowledge that he had refused a few moments to his little son for a moment of closeness.

This is the end of this story from the booklet, but the story continues on in so many ways. People need not die for the moment to be lost for a small respite of love to be expressed. Children are grown and gone so quickly and never again does the irretrievable precious instant return. We often, in our pursuit of what we desire to "give" to our loved ones, misplace priorities. Perhaps I would not have chosen this particular theme for our *Love* month page had it not been for two letters received closely on the heels of the visit. One related a long ago incident, during the second World War when she had left home to visit her fiancé at his training camp. They decided to be married and her mother came to me, her best friend, terribly distraught because of not having been invited to the ceremony. Sentimentalist that I am, I asked why and received the answer that "mother" had never been there for anything else—school plays, recitals, concerts that were very important—so why should this be any different? Mother was working to pay for all the lessons, the grand piano, probably all the things she herself had wanted as a child, but which her daughter did not appreciate, wanting only her mother's time and closeness. She stated she still felt the hurt, down through all these years. The second letter was detailing the marvelous work being done by a young couple, but concluded "they are so intense that I just want to grab them by the shoulders and say 'slow down, smell the roses,' while your senses are intact."

There is a bumper sticker out here, perhaps all over, that says "Have you hugged your child today?" Spouse, parent, friend could all be substituted if child is not appropriate to your particular situation. Do not let the moment pass nor make it a one-time thing for I am firmly convinced that time is growing short for all of us, on one plane or another.

### Books

Some of our best referrals of good books come through personal letters and my last came as a P.S. on the back of an envelope. So glad she remembered to suggest *Joshua* by Girzone. From a church Newsletter comes a review of *Soloing* by Luci Swindoll, a book for single Christian women with suggestions for living happily alone. Also, *The Twelve* by Leslie B. Flynn. This unvarnished truth about the men Jesus chose for his closest companions makes us confident that we, too, can be transformed. The book, *On the Job: The Christian from 9 to 5* by Fred Catherwood brings to mind a much older book of challenge, *In His Steps*, although it deals with modern times. It also reminded me of a story told by a very dear pastor friend who found it necessary to supplement his family's income by working outside the profession. After a particular trying day he asked a co-worker how he managed to carry his Christianity over into the workplace and the man replied, "I have worked here 12 years and never once told anyone that I am a Christian, that way they do not expect me to act like one." How horribly sad.

A notice in the Battle Creek, Michigan, newsletter told of the plans being made by their Aid Society for a Bazaar the latter part of this year, urging members to work throughout the year on this project. It brought to mind the fact that the Women's Interest Committee also urged a Craft Sale be held at Conference, 1989, for the benefit of the SCSC, so we urge you all to make plans for your societies contributions and make this another exciting success as was the one in Salem. Speaking of Salem, they sent the Board a check for \$165 approximately for the balance of the craft items from our sale which they sold at their Apple Butter Festival. How we thank you all for your participation, donors and purchasers alike, and look forward to

next August.

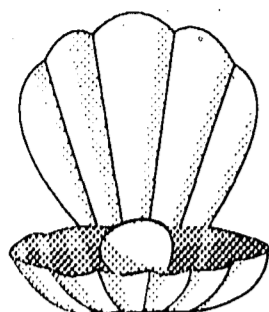
Are you inundated with appeals for charitable contributions throughout the year? I counted 17 in one three-day period. An article in a recent Church Women United communication suggested planning annual giving, choosing perhaps a few and disregarding the rest, closing with, "Thoughtfully planned gifts are the kind of gifts that can make a difference to an organization. Budgeting each year for this kind of giving, takes a lot of the distress out of the decision. Often older people feel a real tug when each appeal arrives. Probably some not so old, too. Just a thought to relieve some stressful decisions.

I have been very good lately about keeping my letters short so they would fit on the allotted pages, but this month I am going to stretch my luck and urge you to send a valentine to some shut-in. If the day has passed, send a belated one. Imagine the surprise when they open it and the joy and warmth it will bring. Can you think of three things to mention in a note to tell her how unique she is? I can hear her now saying, "Wow! She thinks I am special." While we are on this subject, why not approach a young person in your church that you especially admire and tell them so. Some of them are so very precious and adults are all too prone to only notice when they slip. We have some of the neatest children and young people in my church and I am sure you do too, but how will they ever know you think so if you do not tell them?

Guess I had better not press my luck any further, so I will say good-bye for now until next month. **SR**

*Marilyn*

**Thoughtfully planned gifts are the kind of gifts that can make a difference to an organization. Budgeting each year for this kind of giving, takes a lot of the distress out of the decision.**



Pearls of history from the Seventh Day Baptist Historical Society

## Thank you, John Comer

by Janet Thorngate, librarian

**I**would recognize your handwriting anywhere now. Those great crescent-moon capital C's, t's crossed by soaring d's, and the flourishing tails of y's and s's that nearly encircle whole words. After trailing them through the 18th century manuscript collections of several New England libraries, I am awed.

So it was you who transcribed the Newport Seventh Day Baptist Church covenant, thus preserving the only two known surviving copies. It was you who first collected the information to write a history of the Newport Baptists—and wrote it. You, who copied that long nine-page transcription into the Baptist record book. Without it we would not know the full story of our origins in America.

Then why is it that we have not known you, John Comer? What had you, a little-known Baptist pastor

who died before the age of 30, to do with Seventh Day Baptists? As it turns out, you had quite a bit to do with them.

Since nothing you wrote was published during your lifetime, I suppose our ignorance might be justified. When the diary you kept for most of your life (1704-1734) was finally printed 160 years later (1893), its own editor considered it "old fashioned," of "quaint and simple" expression in "an antique pattern." Tucked away in a fine-print footnote was reference to another footnote—both noting the existence of a manuscript containing that first Seventh Day Baptist covenant. Now, 260 years after you copied it, we finally locate it. Thank you, John Comer!

### Who was John Comer?

As a 17-year-old Boston Congregationalist, preparing to enter

Harvard University, John Comer read a book by Joseph Stennett (a British Seventh Day Baptist) and became a Baptist. He later attended Yale, rather than Harvard, but by 1726, at age 21, was in Newport, Rhode Island, becoming pastor of the First Baptist Church. When they invited the Seventh Day Baptist church, which had separated from them 55 years before, to assist in Comer's ordination, the Sabbatarians declined because of his "neglect to observe the fourth commandment."

That action seems not to have hindered Comer's relationship with the Seventh Day Baptists, however. Throughout his diary during his six Newport years, he makes routine reference to the Sabbatarians. He often attended the Sabbath services, recording positive critiques of Pastor Joseph Crandall's sermons in his journal and taking copious notes when I Hopkinton Pastor,

### Newport Seventh Day Baptist Church Covenant

After serious consideration and seeking God's face among ourselves for the Lord to direct us in a right way for us and our children, so as might be for God's glory and our souls' good, we, viz., William Hiscox, Samuel Hubbard, Steven Mumford, Roger Baster, Tacy Hubbard, Rachel Langworthy, [Anne] Mumford, entered into covenant with the Lord and with one another, and gave up ourselves to God and one to another, to walk together in all God's holy commandments and holy ordinances according to what the Lord had discovered to us or should discover to be his mind for us to be obedient unto; with sense upon our hearts of great need to be watchful over one another, did promise so to do, and in edifying and building up one another in our most holy faith; this 7th day of December, 1671.

(Quoted from a "manuscript of John Comer" in an editor's footnote, page 325, in Isaac Backus, *History of New England with Particular Reference to the Denomination of Christians Called Baptists*, 2nd ed., Newton, Massachusetts: Backus Historical Society, 1871. Manuscript copies in John Comer's handwriting (dated 1728 and 1730) are in the libraries of Andover-Newton Theological School, Newton Center, Mass. and Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence, R.I. The latter dates the covenant December 23.)

Thomas Hiscox, preached. Comer and Crandall filled each other's pulpit when one was ill and often went together to pray for a citizen in crisis.

### Comer, the history buff

Little reference is made in the diary, however, to Comer's intense interest in the history of the Newport Baptists. He was reportedly shocked to discover upon arrival in Newport that the Baptist church (by then some 80 years old) had no written records and no covenant or articles of faith. It is not surprising then, that he turned to the Seventh-Day people, who had been keeping good records for at least 34 years, for help in finding information. They apparently obliged because it is a manuscript of Samuel Hubbard's (long since disappeared) that Comer cites for information on the origin and early membership of the Baptist church (of which Hubbard was an early member). Most historians have concluded that the long manuscript describing the 1671 Sabbatarian split-off, which Comer transcribed line-by-line into the record book, was also Hubbard's contemporary account. (It was published in the *Seventh Day Baptist Memorial* in 1852, pages 28-39, with due appreciation to John Comer for preserving it: "A brief and faithful relation of the difference between those of this Church and those who withdrew their communion from it, with the causes and reasons of the same..." The record book is in the Newport Historical Society Library.)

Much of what Comer learned about the history, however, he did not put into the Baptist record book, which he kept himself during his three-year term as pastor. He managed to get the church to adopt a covenant (making no reference to the 55-year-old Seventh Day Baptist covenant he had by then discovered), but no statement of

faith was developed. That is not too surprising since by this time Comer and the congregation so differed on the issue of the laying-on-of-hands that the pastor requested they release him from fellowship. He became a member and then pastor of the Newport 2nd Baptist Church, which had split off from the mother church, mainly over that very issue, 15 years before the Sabbatarians left.

### Copies SDB covenant

It was during Comer's pastorate at the second church that he wrote his history of the Newport Baptists. It remains in manuscript form, a small 20-page booklet in Comer's handwriting, in the Backus papers at Rhode Island Historical Society Library in Providence. On the title page, signed and dated 1730, John Comer shares the roots of his personal interest in church history:

*"Pen'd by me for my own use and advantage that so I might eye the goodness of God in supporting his own case under the various dispensations of his holy providence."*

And here, on pages 14 to 16, is Comer's account of the birth of American Seventh Day Baptists complete with quotation of their 1671 covenant and its list of seven constituting members. The list matches the list we have from Samuel Hubbard's journal, which gives the December 23, 1671 date "we entered into covenant" but does not quote it. Comer's history also contains the earliest information (beyond that in fragments of Hubbard's journal) on the role of the Mumfords and Thomas Hiscox in the new church. With Comer's earlier (1728) copy of the covenant is a description of the communion, service celebrated at the time of the church's organization, along with other early SDB anecdotes not surviving in other sources. (This

copy is among the Backus papers at Andover-Newton Theological School Library in Newton Center, Massachusetts.)

Unfortunately for 20th century scholars, John Comer does not cite his sources very carefully. He tells us he had Hubbard material, but doesn't always say which information came from it and which was already oral tradition or something else. Isaac Backus, the earliest Baptist historian to give serious attention to Seventh Day Baptists (in his *History of New England...* published 1777-84), leaned heavily on Hubbard journal material (in the process, preserving most of what we have of it). He also leaned heavily on Comer material—or had access to the same Hubbard material which neither of them carefully cited.

Our curiosity is never fully satiated. Some things we must take on faith—or the author's own integrity. Comer assures us on his title page that this is, "The best, most correct and exact account of the first settlement of the Baptist churches in Newport, Rhode Island..."

Who would want to dispute the confidence and flourish of that ornate handwriting? The 26-year-old scholar-pastor left Newport in 1731 for Rehobeth where in the three short years before his death from tuberculosis, he gathered a Baptist church of over 90 members. One of John Comer's most-quoted verses of Scripture was Psalm 145:4: "One generation shall praise thy works to another and declare thy mighty acts." **SR**

(Notes on sources: Biographical information on Comer comes from William G. McLoughlin's *New England Dissent*, Harvard University Press, 1971 and *The Diary of John Comer* edited by C. Edwin Barrows, Rhode Island Historical Society, 1893. The author recently reviewed the Comer manuscripts in the libraries noted above.)

SHOULD BE  
HERE

December	December-Giving	\$671,906
	Investment Income (est)	
November	November-Giving	\$615,912
	Investment Income (est)	
October	October-Giving	\$559,920
	Investment Income (est)	
September	September-Giving	\$503,928
	Investment Income (est)	
August	August-Giving	\$447,936
	Investment Income (est)	
July	July-Giving	\$391,944
	Investment Income (est)	
June	June-Giving	\$335,952
	Investment Income (est)	
May	May-Giving	\$279,960
	Investment Income (est)	
April	April-Giving	\$223,968
	Investment Income (est)	
March	March-Giving	\$167,976
	Investment Income (est)	
February	February-Giving	\$111,984
	Investment Income (est)	
January	January-Giving	\$55,992
	Investment Income (est)	

1988 income needed from all sources—\$671,906.  
Per month gift income needed—\$31,630. Total  
needed each month—\$55,992.

## The Denominational Budget... Our partnership in ministry

How is the money being used?

### Five fronts targeted for new church development

As the new year begins, focus of Seventh Day Baptist national extension resources is on five specific locations in five far-flung regions of the U.S. By working with a new church and pastor during the congregation's crucial first years of development, the New Church Development program seeks to help build a strong foundation for steady growth and independence of the new group.

The five locations are New York City in the East; Santa Barbara, California, in the West; Rapid City, South Dakota, in the North; Miami, Florida, in the South; and Naylor/Doniphan, Missouri, in the middle of the country. These five churches work in partnership with the Missionary Society, with support from all conference churches, to set goals and develop specific strategies for growth in their location. For a period of three or four years, the church receives assistance with payment of their pastor's salary on a decreasing scale toward independence.

In Santa Barbara, California, Rev. Robert Babcock, a veteran extension pastor involved with the pilot RON Project (Reach Out Now) in the 1970s, serves a new congregation in another city with totally different origins and growth potential. (The Houston, Texas, church, site of that early RON Project, is now totally independent and supporting a full-time pastor with its own branch congregation.)

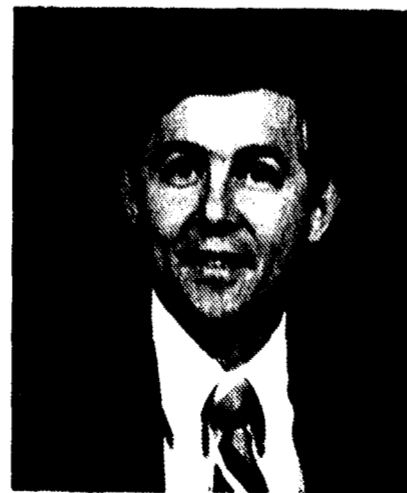
In the central Missouri location, Pastor Ron Elston has worked in the program for some time through several development phases including extension of a branch church group, decline and discouragement of the early nucleus, and a recent

move with exciting new growth.

The other three current extension pastors have just recently begun their ministry. Andrew Samuels in Miami, Florida, and Richard Evans in New York City moved to their young urban congregations while still in training in the T.I.M.E. (Training in Ministry and Extension) program. Rev. Larry Graffius, an experienced pastor, was recently called by another new congregation started by T.I.M.E. students James and Cindy Gardiner in Rapid City, South Dakota.

Under new guidelines, based on experience with the Extension Pastor Program in place for the past 10 years, these extension pastors and churches work very closely with the Director of Extension, Rodney Henry, giving priority to outreach and evangelism activity in the new location. These New Church Development Program guidelines emphasize planning and accountability between church, pastor and the Missionary Society which administers the program.

Fourteen churches have received support for extension pastors since the program began in the 1970s. Much has been learned from that experience to apply to more focused church extension models for the 1990s.



Rev. Larry Graffius, newest extension pastor, serves the new church in Rapid City, South Dakota.

## News from four continents

reprinted from *Seventh Day Baptist World*

### Burma churches function during civil unrest

L. S. Thanga has succeeded in getting two letters to America recently, despite the political and social unrest in Rangoon, Burma. (Both were sent through a friend who mailed them from Bangkok, Thailand.) In a letter to Leon Lawton dated August 14, he described the civil disturbances but also noted "hopeful signs... We have to prepare ourselves for new opportunities and the changing situation to the fullest advantage of the Gospel... We, the SDBs are alright. We are alive. But the regular attendance of Sabbath worship services are much reduced due to transport and many unusual difficulties... Recently three fine families with grown-up, educated children joined our church in Rangoon. The congregation is growing in number as well as spiritually. Some of our educated youths are preparing to undergo theological training."

In a letter to Dale Thorngate dated September 28 he sent the conference statistics. They arrived too late for publication but we note 13 new members in the Rangoon church. (Earlier in the year he had noted losses among the Chin Hills churches because of emigration to India.) Again he described the social and political unrest which has closed public offices, schools, and transportation. "Thousands of people were killed and arrested. The country is now under military administration... We the SDBs in Rangoon are alright. We are unable to get news from churches in Chin Hills. We ask your prayers."

### Poland granted publishing permit

Bronislaw Ciesielski reports big news: The Polish church has received permission from the government to act as a publishing house named Spirit of Times Publishing House. The Minister of Culture has also allotted a large amount of paper. "It is very much for us for the first time, and it is a distinction for our small denomination. It is, in the same way indirectly, a distinction for our family the World Federation." The hope is to print a number of books and pamphlets in addition to periodicals. *Spirit of Times* will be published monthly in 1989 (7,500 copies) from the state printing house in Bydgoszcz. "We'd like to buy a new offset printing machine to be independent from state printing houses. Our print is very poor. We have paper for one year... Probably we will subsidize this activity, but it is mission."

Summer conferences were well attended: Rally for Youth in Tomassow Mazowiecki, July 3-5 on the theme "Strong in the Lord," the Church Conference in Tychy, July 23-24 with the theme "Be Holy" (350 attending), and baptismal ceremony for ten people August 27 in Skoczow. Ciesielski notes that a major concern is the emigration of many members to West Germany.

### South Africa enlarges fellowship

James Siwani reports three major meetings in the South Africa Conference: the annual conference September 2-4 in Port Elizabeth; a round of talks in September with the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Christ regarding merger of the two groups; and a

General Meeting of Sabbath-keepers and Baptists on October 1. A year ago ten groups were represented at the first such meeting of Sabbath-keepers and Baptists. It was held at the invitation of the South Africa Seventh Day Baptist Conference "to foster fellowship among the various Sabbatharians and Baptists."

### Brazil publishing grows

Brazil Convention also expands publishing. Ruben Nisio tells of the establishment of a new printing room in Curitiba in May. Publications so far are a pamphlet, "A Great Friend" (20,000 copies) for evangelistic work, then Sabbath School lessons and the newsletter *Mensageiro Cristao*. He also describes an evangelistic course, "Freed by Truth" with 15 weekly lessons to be taught at home by a Bible worker. After a year and a half of use, 700 individuals have completed it, 500 receiving certificates, 400 still studying. Many who take the course request baptism and church membership. "... We have registered an increase in the work with the beginning of new groups and the growing of many congregations.... Praise God, the Gospel is being preached among our people, by any way we can, according to our available resources." The Convention's semi-annual session was January 11-15 in Curitiba. SR

Pastors and wives be thinking about:  
**Pastors' Conference**

April 19-24, 1989

Alfred-Alfred Station, New York

We have invited Richard Blackburn from the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center to provide two full days of training in "Conflict Management" and "Mediation Skills."

Stay tuned for more exciting speakers and topics

**Wanted**

**Instrumentalists for a conference concert band.**

If you play an instrument, are willing to bring it to Conference in Portland and play in a concert band, please let President Luan Ellis know, as soon as possible, what instrument you are willing to play. If enough people are interested, we shall try to put together a band.

Please send your response to:  
Luan Ellis  
614 Pleasant Valley Road  
Alfred Station, NY 14803



**FOCUS**  
on missions

**Texas groups working for growth**

**Houston, TX, USA:** Pastor Bill Shobe reported in November that their branch Beth-El group in the east Houston area was working to organize as a new congregation by January, 1989. There is also a new branch group south of Houston in Pearland, Texas, being sponsored by the Houston church. Because of growth and need for more space at the church building site, it was also hoped that adjacent property could be obtained.

**TEE underway in Brazil**

**Curitiba, Brazil, South America:** The end of last October, the inaugural class of their Theological Education by Extension (TEE) was begun. Three teachers, all having theological education, form the staff—Rev. Bernardino de Vargas, Rev. Fred Kuhlemann and Sister Lucineide Alves Miranda. The General Assembly of their Convention also met in Curitiba on January 11-15, 1989. The new Temple at Joao Pessoa, PB, was dedicated last July 30. This is in the new area of outreach in Northeast Brazil.

**COSAR releases new support guidelines**

**Pastoral Support Guidelines, USA:** The Conference Committee on Support and Retirement (COSAR) took action at their November meeting to adjust the suggested basic salary level to reflect today's standards. After study of school teachers' salaries certain basic goals were set. The Missionary Society executive committee, in reviewing these, voted to implement them in their support of Extension and Missionary Pastors, matching the action of the local churches receiving such support in aid of their pastor. This can become effective as early as July 1, 1989.

**South Dakota group seeks to meet needs**

**Rapid City, SD, USA:** Extension Pastor Larry Graffius, serving under the New Church Development guidelines, set forth two papers as he began his ministry late in 1988. "Getting Ready to Grow" and "Strategizing for Growth" identified needs, set forth plans and led to a survey of unchurched people in an area of Rapid City. Basic questions, with the major response given were:

1. What do you think is the greatest need in the Rapid City Community?  
*More jobs, 22%.*
2. Why do you think most people don't attend church?  
*Don't have time/too busy, 23%.*
3. If you were looking for a church in the area, what kinds of things would you look for?  
*Friendliness/fellowship, 22%.*
4. What advice would you give me as a pastor?  
*Give spiritual help/counsel/be sensitive/understanding, 28%.*
5. Would meeting on Saturday be a problem?  
*Of the 97 persons responding, 53 indicated that this would not be a problem. For most who said it was a problem, a conflict with work was the primary reason.*

**Correction from last month**

**Poplar Bluff, MO, USA:** Pastor Rick Smith's radio program for the Faith Seventh Day Baptist Church (Doniphan, MO) is not yet on the air. The 15-minute recorded program will be broadcast every other Sabbath on radio station KOKS (King Of KingS).

# Editorial

## My thanks

It does not seem long ago to me—Editor John Bevis had written his final editorial and I was preparing to take responsibility for *The Sabbath Recorder*. My first issue was in August of 1982—it took Leanne Lippincott and I six weeks to prepare the monthly magazine. Milton College was closing that July as we worked on the issue. My wife, Jean, went into labor and gave birth to our first son on *Recorder* deadline day (July 20). Now, 79 issues later, it is my turn to write that final editorial.

I owe a large debt of gratitude to a great many people who assisted with *The Sabbath Recorder* over the last six and one half years. My thanks go to all of those who served on the board of trustees of the American Sabbath Tract Society and the Tract and Communication Council. These people allowed us to modernize the physical job of putting out the magazine. Technical advances allowed us to move from working all night pasting down type from the painfully slow single line typesetter (if you made a mistake, you had to type the entire story over!) to typesetting and page design on the computer screen.

I also need to thank the good people that I worked with at the Center in Janesville. Every member of the staff there became a part of our "extended" family—they helped my wife and I raise our kids! A special "thank you" goes to Leanne Lippincott for her help through all the years that I was editor. Her handiwork still shows in each issue.

I appreciated the support I felt from SDBs all across the country—but especially from my family—from my wife, who put up with my sometimes "workaholic" tendencies

and from my parents, Dr. & Mrs. Kenneth Smith, who collected and edited *Religion in the News* for six years (with no recognition).

## The state of the magazine-1989

Pastor Kevin Butler will become Editor Butler beginning with the April issue of *The Sabbath Recorder*. Seventh Day Baptists should be thankful for the quality of this leadership. I have every confidence that Kevin will improve the *Recorder* with fresh ideas and new insights.

Let's take a look at the challenge he has before him. At Conference sessions in 1988, I surveyed those who attended the report from the Communications Council. I would like to take a moment to review what those SDB's thought.

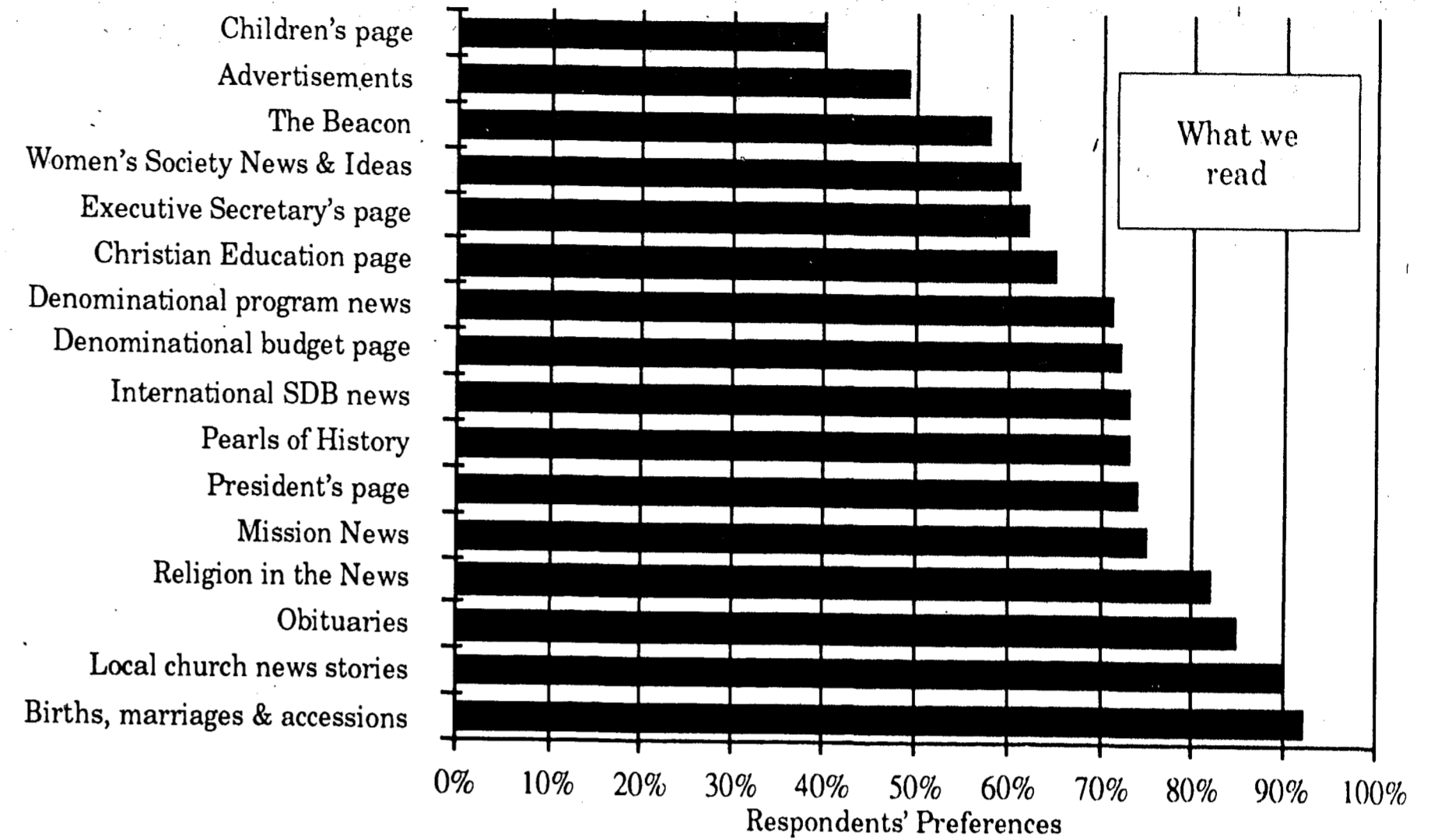
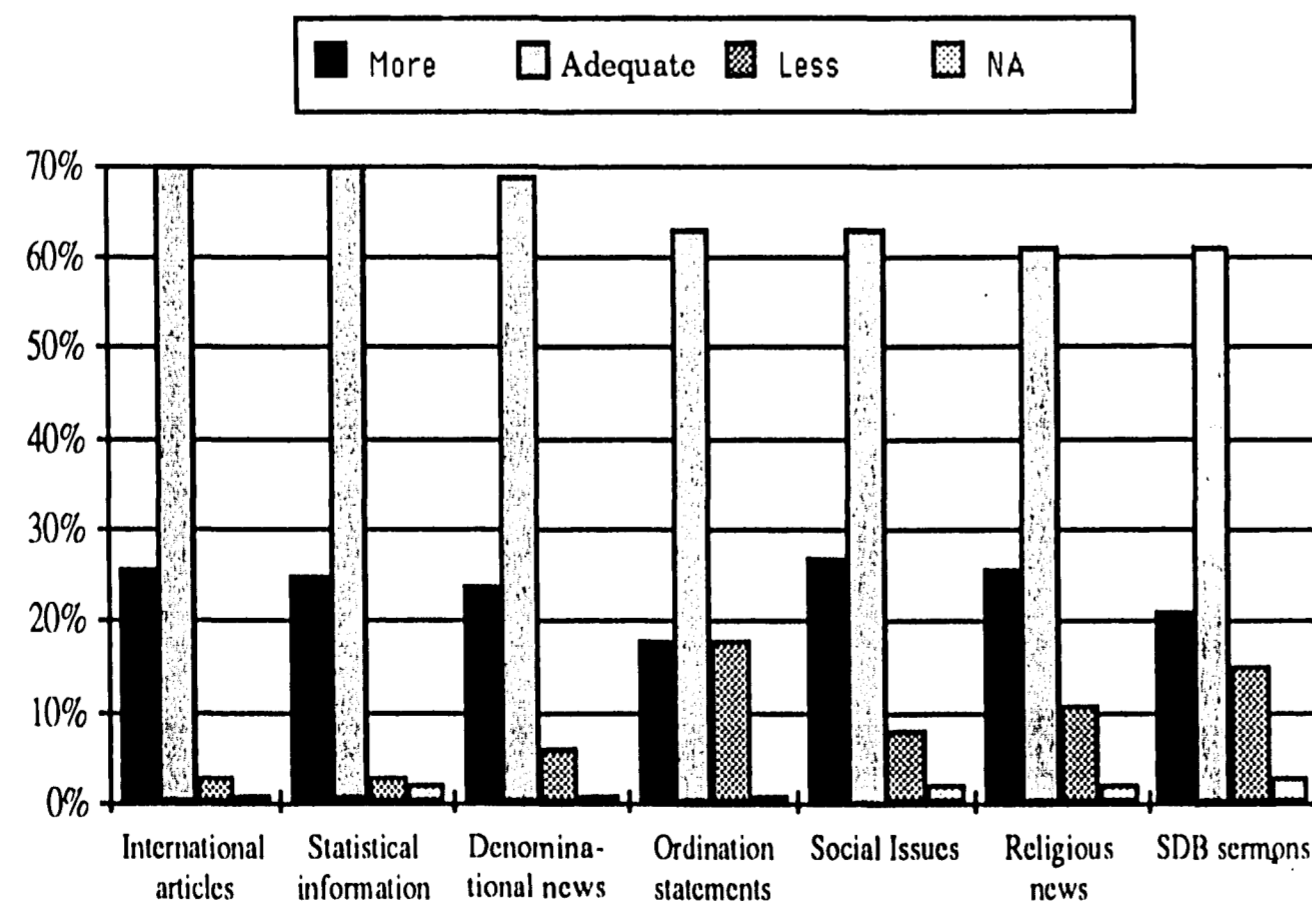
On special issues, 59% said that they did not recognize the June 1988 special issue (Changing Lives) when it arrived at their home. 81% said that they were willing to give up regular issues so that special issues like the June 88 issue could be published. 82% said that that

issue was the kind of material they felt "comfortable" giving to a friend. At the same time, only 16% shared a copy with anyone!

My friends, we are *not* doing evangelism—we are not spreading the gospel simply by budgeting for publications and printing words and pictures. Unless Seventh Day Baptists are willing to tell the good news of Christ, our publishing budgets are wasted dollars! You cannot buy evangelism, only evangelistic tools. We must do it ourselves.

On the question of what readers would like to see in monthly issues, for the most part, those responding were satisfied with the magazine. The charts at the bottom of the page show responses to specific areas of the publication.

When asked what they read in the magazine, the respondents showed a surprising consistency. The only pattern that is clear is that SDBs are most interested in news concerning the SDB family. It is also clear that items that can be quickly "digested" (Religion in the News, Focus, etc.) are popular pages.

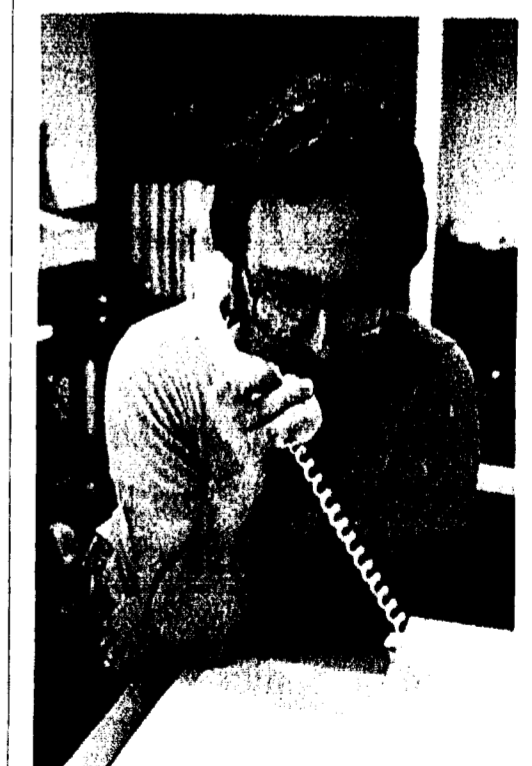
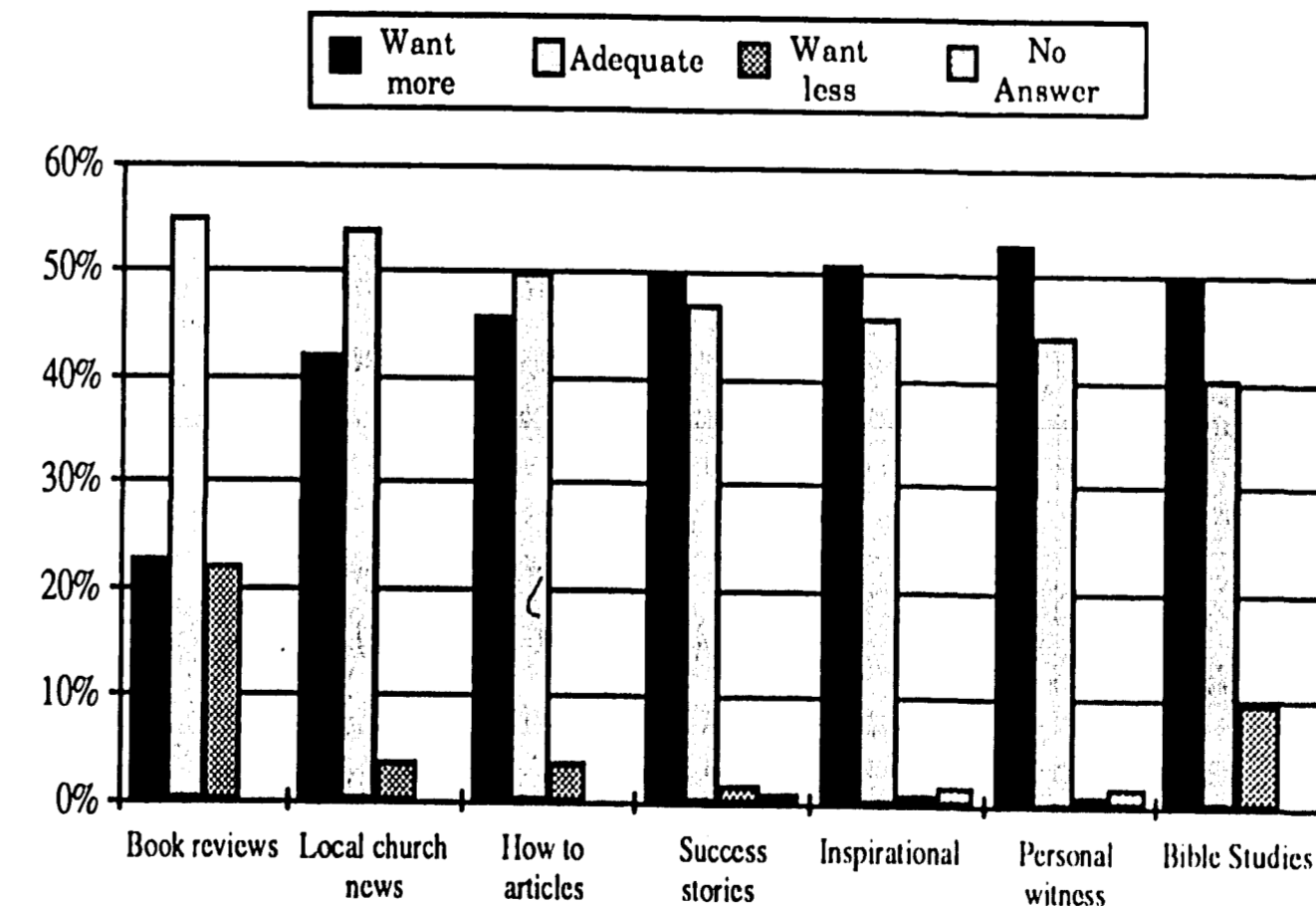


The *Recorder* attempts to be both an outreach tool and an internal communication device. It is a difficult "tight-rope" to walk. Perhaps this is the most difficult combination of problems our new editor faces. On one hand, our Conference is calling for the publication to reshape itself into an evangelistic tool. On the other hand, our people clearly crave information about their fellow Seventh Day Baptists. The survey shows that our method of mailing

evangelistic publications to current Seventh Day Baptists is ineffective for outreach—it is simply the wrong audience. Unless we are prepared to publish two magazines—to fund a budget that is three times the size and find an audience of the unsaved, we will need to continue our "balancing act." I believe that a better way is to stop trying to reach the world with the magazine and begin to reach our neighbors with our personal faith in Christ. *The*

*Sabbath Recorder* (as an internal communication device) then becomes an excellent way to inform those we have reached about who these SDBs really are.

As I complete my last regular (internal) issue of the magazine and begin work on my very last outreach issue, I pray that our new editor can bring his enthusiasm and insight to this dilemma. **SR**



Editor D. Scott Smith

## Reader Reaction

Dear Editor,

As a Christian musician, devoted to honoring our Saviour through music as a member of The Heralds Quartet, I want to respond to a recent article in *The Sabbath Recorder*.

What troubled me first about Pastor Thomas McElwain's article, "Psalm, Song, or Silence," (*Sabbath Recorder*, October, 1988) was its narrow one-sidedness bolstered with slanted, charged language. To say that early "Seventh Day Baptists remained untainted by the stain of hymn-singing" implies that the church today is a lesser, more corrupt and unfaithful entity that it was three centuries ago. It is the awful, corrupting hymn, making "inroads" in the church's innate purity since 1690, that has

brought us to this sad state of affairs. And it all began because of "a misinterpretation of Scripture!" This insidious erosion of purity is the fault of decades of hymn-writing that steadily departed "from the Bible completely." I had really hoped that the Spirit of God was winning among us, not losing. ...

A key problem with McElwain's thesis is that it cannot be followed consistently. One may use the same logic to demonstrate that only those sermons expressly recorded in Scripture should be heard from the pulpit. Archaeology, anthropology, history, linguistics and human experience are stagnant sources of insight in Bible Study, since, after all, nothing can add to or equal the exalted words of Scripture.

While it may be true that the

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*The Challenge of the Disciplined Life* by Richard Foster—This includes eight 15-minute video segments on four tapes suitable for a 13-week adult course. They deal with the topics, Money, Sexuality and Power.

*Questions Teens Ask*—by Rick Wilkerson

The children of  
Rev. & Mrs. Rex E. Zwiebel  
announce the upcoming celebration of  
their parents' 50th wedding anniversary  
on March 7, 1989. If you would like to  
join in the celebration, we invite you to  
participate in a card shower.

Their address is:

127 Glenbrook Rd.  
Rochester, NY 14616

Mike, Marcia & Gretchen Zwiebel

Bible is the apogee of literary and spiritual excellence, that does not mean that God's children, recreated in the image of his own Son, cannot create other works of God-honoring literary and musical art under the shade of the Bible's authoritative umbrella.

McElwain confuses the **inspiration** of Scripture with its **authority**. While the Bible is the sole and final authority in all matters concerning the content of faith and practice for the Christian, it is certainly not the only **inspired** word from God. The fact that the Bible measures and tests all other human endeavor does not thereby invalidate other Spirit-indited works, whether poetry, sermons, music, or commentaries, as legitimate helps in Christian conduct or worship.

I would certainly hope that Pastor McElwain preaches under the inspiration and power of the Holy Spirit! But the fact that the Spirit of God empowers his preaching does not make his sermons a final arbiter in matters of faith and practice. Inspiration is present, but not authority. Inspired but non-authoritative products of Christian creativity are still an essential part of the Christian faith.

...Thumbing through several hymnals in my library, I found 20 distinct English musical renditions of all or part of the 23rd Psalm. Each one had its own unique character in contrast to the others. The styles ranged from J.S. Bach's "Sheep May Safely Graze" to Verlin Chalmer's folk version. Each of these hymns diverges from the original Hebrew text a slightly different way, being based upon the dynamic thought of the Psalm, rather than upon a literal "word-for-word" rendering. Are the sentiments expressed in them any less true because they do not slavishly follow the Hebrew original?

According to McElwain, these hymns are "progressively more distant from the Bible text," with ever-increasing "sentimentality." Is it not more correct to say that Christians, generation after generation, continue to draw from the infinite fount

of God's Word, and to carry the refreshment they find there in new and creative "water-pots" never designed before? It would have been better if McElwain had shown us his new "water-pots" and then let them captivate our corporate preferences, thereby enriching our lives and hymnic heritage without robbing us of the previous blessings. That is part of our freedom as Seventh Day Baptists.

...McElwain fears sentimentality in Christian music, believing that it "competes with the Word of God," robbing it of its power. Such a "Word" cannot be truly divinely inspired and authoritative if that is true. God's Word is as invincible as himself; no work of man can mar it.

I love singing good Scripture songs! My soul soars with their risings and fallings. But that same soul sings songs of spiritual ecstasy in the great hymns of the Christian faith as well. That soaring, that ecstasy, is emotion--and very sentimental!

I do not doubt Pastor McElwain's sincerity. Perhaps his rendering of Scripture songs are of an even more exalted standard than those I have already enjoyed. I would praise the Lord if they were. But I fear that he is cutting himself off from a wonderful heritage of worship and praise that rightfully belongs to us all, a heritage that God, in his all-wise providence, provided for us. Isn't it wonderful that our "bondage to a liturgical tradition" allows us the freedom to enjoy both what McElwain blesses, and what he blasts.

...Having said all of this, I know that God blesses Pastor McElwain's ministry. I pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to empower his witness in Finland, and that God will bless Thomas with ever-broadening vistas of his vastness.

James A. Ayars  
Thousand Oaks, California

## Accessions

### Lost Creek, West Virginia David L. Taylor, Pastor

Joined after Baptism  
Blaine Finchum  
Linda Finchum  
Jason Finchum

Jennifer Finchum  
Jamey Bonnett  
Jodi Bonnett

### Paint Rock, Alabama John D. Bevis, Pastor

Joined by Letter  
Laura Leigh Bevis

### Verona, New York Russell Johnson, Pastor

Joined after Baptism  
Howard Mann  
Penelope Mann  
Shawn Rose  
Pamela Warner  
Timothy Johnson  
Mary Stamp  
Donald Stamp  
Gayle Sholtz

Joined after Testimony  
James Zell  
Anne Zell  
Vanessa Hopkins  
Dan Hopkins

## Births

**Rinard.**—A daughter, Carly Rebecca Rinard, was born to Tom and Mary Jane (Curry) Rinard on September 18, 1988, in Martinsburg, West Virginia.

**McNeme.**—A son, Sean Christopher McNeme, was born to Steve and Vivian (Bass) McNeme on November 9, 1988, in Odessa, Texas.

**Horten.**—A daughter, Brittany Nicole Horten, was born to Keith and Clara (Goodson) Horten of Texarkana, Arkansas, on November 5, 1988.

## Notice

The annual meeting of the members of the Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society will be held at the Pawcatuck Seventh Day Baptist Meeting House, 120 Main St., Westerly, RI 02891, on Sunday, March 19, 1989, at 2:00 p.m. for the following purposes:

To elect voting members, a Board of Managers and officers to hold office until the next annual meeting and until their successors are elected.

To hear and act upon the reports of the Board of Managers and officers for the fiscal year January 1, 1988, to December 31, 1988.

To ratify the appointment of independent public accountants for the current fiscal year.

To consider and act upon such other matters as may properly come before said meeting or any adjournment thereof.

The Board of Managers has fixed the close of business on February 28, 1989, as the time at which members entitled to notice thereof and to vote at the meeting and any adjournment thereof shall be determined.

Cindy Nadeau, Secretary

## Obituaries

**Drake.**—Leon F. Drake, 75, of Shinglehouse, Pennsylvania, died on November 16, 1988, in Charles Cole Memorial Hospital, Coudersport, Pennsylvania.

Leon was born on April 23, 1913, in the town of Bolivar, New York. He was a son of Hal L. and Nettie L. (Cowles) Drake. On April 21, 1935, in Friendship, New York, he married the former Elizabeth Burrows, who survives.

Drake was a 1930 graduate of Shinglehouse High School and attended Salem College, Salem, West Virginia. He was a self-employed dairy farmer.

He was a member and trustee of the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Richburg, New York, had been a committeeman for the former GLF and Agway, and was a school board director for the former Sharon Township School District.

Surviving besides his wife, Betty, are a son, Denver D. of Shinglehouse; four daughters, Nettie Sue Nichols and Carmen J. Drake, both of Shinglehouse, Fawzia D. DeLong of Bristol, West Virginia, and Rachel E. Bollinger of York, Pennsylvania; three sisters, Lina A. Burdick of Wellsville, New York, Alice C. Bauman of Hanover, Pennsylvania, and Faith M. Young of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania; five grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held at the Virgil L. Howard Funeral Home, Shinglehouse, on November 19, 1988, with Rev. Wayne Babcock and Rev. Stephan F. Saunders officiating. Burial was in East Sharon Cemetery. SM

**Thompson.**—Roy D. Thompson, 72, of Hebron, Pennsylvania, died on November 23, 1988, at his residence following an extended illness.

Born on May 28, 1816, on Crandall Hill in Hebron, he was the son of Alva W. and Lillian (Dingman) Thompson. On April 24, 1943, he married Ann Feschanko in Coudersport, Pennsylvania, who survives.

Roy was a lifetime resident of the Hebron area where he was a retired farmer and a retired employee of the Pittsburgh Corning Corporation in Port Allegheny, Pennsylvania.

Roy was a member of the First Seventh Day Baptist Church of Hebron and the Eulalia Lodge 342 F&AM of the Coudersport Consistory.

Surviving, in addition to his wife, are one brother, William W. of Hebron; three sisters, Dorothy VanPelt

of Hebron Center, Pennsylvania, Lena Haskins of Hebron, and June Schnepf of Clermont, Pennsylvania; three grandsons and several nieces and nephews.

Roy was preceded in death by his son, Jack D. Thompson on October 2, 1979.

**Jehn.**—Brian D. Jehn was born on November 24, 1949, at Wausau, Wisconsin, and died in the fall of 1988.

His body was discovered on November 22, 1988. Brian had joined the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Milton while living in Loves Park, Illinois. He is survived by his parents and three children—Jami, Jodi and Josh.

Funeral services were held at the Restlawn Memorial Mausoleum Park in Wausau on November 28, 1988, with Rev. Dennis Drews of Trinity Lutheran Church and Rev. Earl Cruzan officiating. Intombment was at Restlawn Memorial Mausoleum Park. EC

**Bee.**—E. Kay Bee was born on April 3, 1912, on Otter Slide near Berea, West Virginia, and died on November 29, 1988.

He was the youngest son of the late E. Hayes and the late Florence (Oldaker) Bee. He grew up on a farm and as a teenager accepted Christ as his Savior, was baptized and joined the Ritchie Seventh Day Baptist Church. He later served as Sabbath School superintendent and was licensed to preach.

He married Lillian Bottoms, the second daughter of the late Rev. Ary T. Bottoms and the late Jewel (Mason) Bottoms. To this union were born three children. After a year on the farm with his parents, they moved to Clarksburg, West Virginia, where he worked for the Sun Oil Company. Later they moved to Welton, Iowa, where he was self-employed. He and Lillian joined the Welton Seventh Day Baptist Church and soon after, in 1937, Kay was ordained a Deacon of the Welton church. After Rev. Bottoms moved to the Farina church, Kay was asked to be the Welton church leader until a full-time pastor could be found, which leadership lasted for two years.

In 1941, Kay and family moved to Fairmont, West Virginia. He was employed by Westinghouse Electric Company. They moved their church membership to the Salem, West Virginia, Seventh Day Baptist Church. In 1953, he was asked to transfer to a plant in Reform,

## Obituaries

Alabama, where he became the head of the Maintenance Engineering Department. His education had consisted of machinist, engineering, and machine design.

After Lillian had taught for 22 years and Kay had worked 33 years for Westinghouse, they retired and moved to LeLand, Florida. They united with the Daytona Beach, Florida, Seventh Day Baptist Church.

Survivors include his wife, Lillian B.; two daughters, Marie Zwiebel of Salem

and Ethel Brown of Spotsylvania, Virginia; a son, Ernest K. Bee Jr. of Wellsville, New York; a brother, Ural G. Bee of Clarksburg, West Virginia; six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his father and mother; a brother, Ru Bee of Richmond, Kentucky; and a grandson, Kevin Zwiebel.

Funeral services were conducted in DeLand by Mr. Bee's pastor, Rev. John H. Camenga of the Daytona Beach Seventh Day Baptist Church.

## Growth in Texas

by Erin Middlesworth  
Missionary Representative

North Central Texas, USA: The Wichita Falls, Texas, Seventh Day Baptist Church continues under the leadership of Pastor William L. Sharon to sponsor new groups and minister effectively for growth. Their main branch is the Dallas-Fort Worth Seventh Day Baptist branch church in Richland Hills, Texas, and is under the leadership of Earle Holston. The church now meets in a Ramada Inn for worship services. They have new visitors from the surrounding area meeting with them on a regular basis.

The Wichita Falls church has joined forces with the Faith Mission of Wichita Falls, which enables the church to help

the needy of the area. Pastor Bill Sharon has also been invited to take part as a chaplain for the Disabled American Veterans and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

A building has been purchased for use as a church. The first meeting at this new church at 2904 Borton Street, Wichita Falls, Texas 76305, was held on November 5, 1988. This new church allows the membership to utilize the many gifts bestowed upon them by friends of the church.

The Wichita Falls church Bible study, held on Wednesday nights, brings families from Archer City, Texas, which is 30 miles south of Wichita Falls. The subject material is selected by the group and is presented by Pastor Bill Sharon as the leader.

Both Pastors Bill Sharon and Earle Holston hold Bible studies under the direction of the Holy Spirit. Both pastors also give all the credit to the Holy Spirit for the training and inspiration which directs them in the leadership of their individual communities and the growth in the North Central Texas area. **SR**

## Marlboro church news

Marlboro, New Jersey, celebrated its annual Harvest Home Sabbath differently this year, even going so far as to call it by a different name—Homecoming Sabbath. Letters of invitation were sent to all members and to special friends of Marlboro, inviting them to come and worship with us on October 29th, and, if desired, to share some of their feelings about the Marlboro church. Marion Campbell and Mary Lewis chose the theme, "Past, Present and Future," and planned the service to focus our thoughts on this topic in relationship to our church. We enjoyed special music by two young ladies: Lora Dickinson played a piano solo and Amy Cruzan shared her talents on the violin. Later in the service, many people shared, in person or by letter, beginning with the person who has been a member longer than anyone else living, Paul G. Davis, who joined in 1915. Also sharing were Mary Davis Green, who joined in 1916, followed by Letha Thomlinson Miller, who joined in 1918. Each of these had special memories of Marlboro church life in days gone by. Mrs. Luther Davis was mentioned as a favorite Sabbath School teacher. We also heard from past pastors, members and friends from home or far away and finally from one of our newest members, Ben Cruzan, age 12.

I believe Rose Davis summed it all up with her thoughts as follows:

"Marlboro church is more than just a building—I cannot tell you how much attending Marlboro means to me, but I can tell you what it has done. It was here that I learned about Jesus, learned our memory verses and sang songs of praise. Sabbath was a day to look forward to. The values that we learned mean more to me now than they did then. All that the church meant has never left me. It was and still is a solid rock on which to stand, giving out faith and strength as it always has. It is much more than a building. It is a dedicated pastor and caring, loving people who are always willing to help with visits, phone calls, prayer or whatever is needed in the community. I am proud to belong to this church. It is as much a part of me as I am of it. It is something that has remained unchanged and is faithful to the reason for its existence, in bringing people together for worship and fellowship and to gain strength for the coming week. This church is a landmark in the South Jersey area and it is also a landmark in my life."

The service ended with an appropriate hymn, "Count Your Blessings," and all adjourned to enjoy a fellowship dinner and good conversation with many friends of the Marlboro church. **SR**

by Diane Ferguson  
Cruzan

*"This church is a landmark in the South Jersey area and it is also a landmark in my life."*

*Rose Davis*



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## *Robe of Achievement*

The Women's Society is accepting nominations for the Robe of Achievement for 1989. Please be considering a woman in your church who meets this criteria for nomination:

- Must be a committed Christian.
- Must be an active member of a local Seventh Day Baptist Church.
- Was/is active as a volunteer in some phase of denominational effort.
- Has shown evidence of special service with her family and/or community.

A complete resumé must be submitted containing a life history including her achievements and activities. Without a resumé in hand, the committee cannot make a competent choice among many nominees.

**Important Note:** This year, in 1989, the committee is starting over. We will no longer be holding on to nominations made in years past. Each year, only current nominations will be considered. If an individual has been submitted before, and you still want that person considered, please resubmit the name as well as the resumé.

Send all nominations to: Jean Lewis  
5060 Sierra St.  
Riverside, CA 92504

Deadline: May 31, 1989

*Sabbath Recorder*

# *Seeking and Finding*

*The Seventh Day Baptist Church*

