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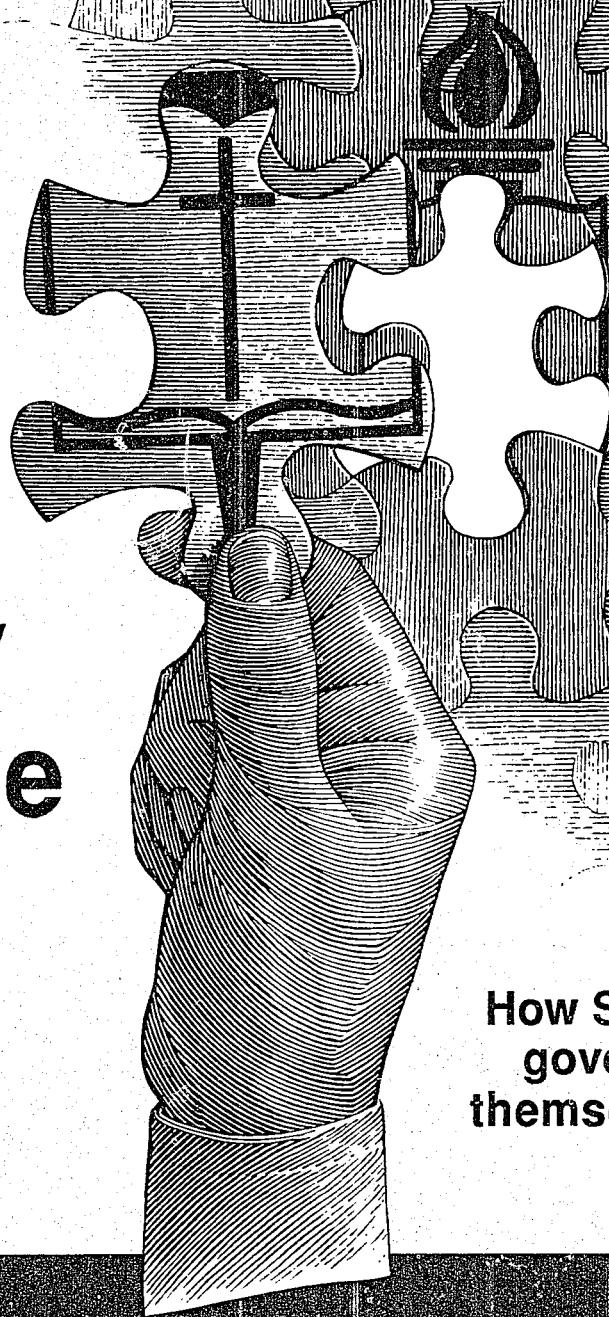
News for and about
Seventh Day Baptists

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February 1990

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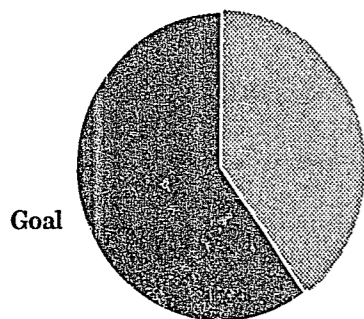
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The Sabbath Recorder



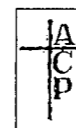
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Who are Seventh Day Baptists?

If you've never read *The Sabbath Recorder* before, you might be wondering who Seventh Day Baptists are. Like other Baptists, we 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. The Bible is our authority both for our faith and our daily conduct.
- freedom of thought under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- the congregational form of church government. 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 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—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, write: Seventh Day Baptist Center, 3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678

Our distinctives set the pattern

by Ernest K. Bee Jr.

Seventh Day Baptists have a unique combination of distinctives. These distinctives and beliefs help to set the pattern as to how we function as a people.

We are Baptists, which is to say we are that portion of the company of the immersed faithful, dispersed in time and space, who compose the membership of the local covenanting church.

As Baptists we believe in the priesthood of all believers. We believe in the equality of God's people. There are no degrees of status among the people of God. There are different functions and offices within the church to which members are called and set apart for service.

The autonomous local congregation is composed of the "priesthood" of all its covenanting members. Therefore all the members must share in deciding the way of Christ in their organized life. Yet, each is not his own "priest," but only the "priest" to his/her fellow covenant members. We are dependent upon each other for the way of Christ to be shown to us. William Willimon says, "Our faith is first always someone else's faith."

Recently I had occasion to experience such an act of ministry. While experiencing intense job related stress and being responsible for teaching an adult Sabbath School class in my church, I determined to take a non-declarative position during the lesson discussion. When asked by a class member about the importance of the Sabbath I asked others for their opinions.

At the close of the class I was asked by the questioning member

why I felt the Sabbath to be unimportant. She explained in private that she had worked for years to convince her husband of the importance of the Sabbath and I had given the impression it was not important.

The next Sabbath I confessed my situation, which had led to my decision to be uninvolved and which, in turn, created more confusion. I then asked for permission to give my Sabbath testimony to the class and thanked this courageous woman for her ministry to a discouraged teacher. The priesthood of believers had functioned once again in my life.

These concepts are essential to our understanding of the local church as a self-governing unit.

The right of the individual to approach God, the responsibility of each Christian to counsel with and intercede for others, and the concept that all are priests are essential to our understanding of the local church as a self-governing unit which looks only to Scripture for its authority. Our statement says:

"We believe that the church of God is all believers gathered by the Holy Spirit and joined into one body, of which Christ is the Head. We believe that the local church is a community of believers organized in covenant relationship for worship, fellowship and service, practicing and proclaiming common convictions, while growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord

and Savior Jesus Christ."

All functions and offices, including the pastoral ministry, within Seventh Day Baptist churches are authorized by the local congregation. The local church calls and ordains its ministry. When a pastor moves from one SDB church to another, it is not unusual for the new church to recognize the pastoral ordination through an installation service. It is in ordination or recognition of such that the local church authorizes the pastor to lead the rituals of that group: baptism, the Lord's Supper, marriage, and the worship of God.

Baptism is frequently singled

out as a distinctive that marks us from other Christians. Baptism by immersion is the symbolic joining of the mortal with the immortal. Our mortal life is joined in baptism with the immortal life of Christ, our resurrected Lord. We, truly, at that moment become "Christ in this world." Baptism speaks of the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior whose way we pledge to follow.

Baptism, the most equalizing of Christian rituals, is the "ordination" of every Christian to a life ministry for Christ. According to our statement of belief, it is "a symbol of death to sin, a pledge to a new life in Him." If ordination is a "marking off" for function or office within the church, then baptism is the "marking off" for function

within the world. It signifies the life of faith in Christ for all individuals and, among Seventh Day Baptists, is the initiation ritual for the covenant group, which is the local congregation.

Baptized believers, joined by covenant, become the church

associate with other churches for fellowship, mutual concerns, and common ministry and mission. Thus our churches invite the larger fellowship to ordination services for pastoral and diaconal office, for the marking of celebrations, and for the settling of serious issues.

It is Scripture which is our final authority.

through which God speaks to His world. Our church covenants usually involve three areas: commitment to God, commitment to each other, commitment to the congregation and its guiding principles. It is a solemn agreement, the basic foundation of the local church, which is now experiencing a revival of emphasis within our churches.

Covenant baptism is confirmed by the Lord's Supper. Baptism is once, but it is continually confirmed through the experience of the Lord's Supper. To accept the bread and the cup is to confirm our baptism with Christ.

For Seventh Day Baptists, the Lord's Supper, our renewal of our baptismal pledge, is a communal rite with the diaconate serving the congregation which, in turn, serves each other. This wonderful act of serving each other reminds us that we are each other's "priest." We are aware that God offers His grace once again through His Son and His people.

Desiring to be God's people, Baptist congregations relate to other like-covenant congregations, though separated by distance. Just as the priesthood of baptized believers binds us together in Christ, so churches recognize and

The Sabbath day, the seventh day of the week, is our mark of distinction among other Baptists. It is our weekly sacrament of servanthood. Our statement says:

"We believe that the gift of Sabbath rest is an experience of God's eternal presence with His people. We believe that in obedience to God and in loving response to His grace in Christ, the Sabbath should be faithfully observed as a day of rest, worship and celebration."

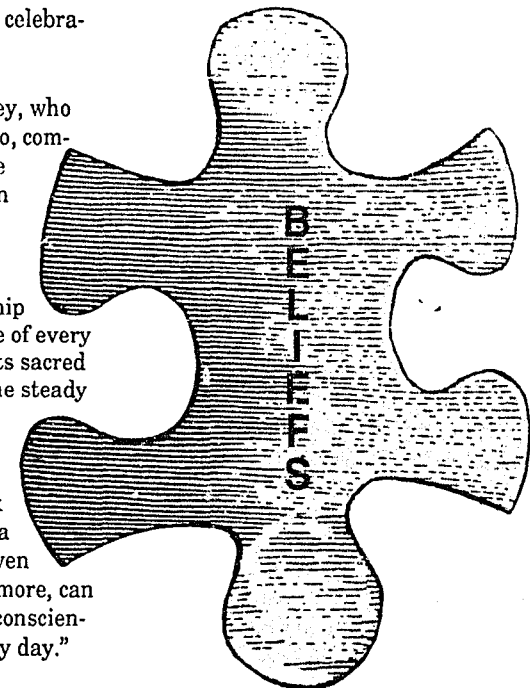
Pastor Loyal F. Hurley, who baptized me 40 years ago, compared the function of the Sabbath in our Christian lives with the analogy of a rudder on a ship:

"Like a rudder to a ship is the Sabbath in the life of every Christian who devotes its sacred hours to God. To hold one steady to his Christian course; to direct his perilous way amid the storms of life; to bring him back to the chartered path if a sudden tempest has driven him aside; all this, and more, can the Sabbath do for any conscientious observer of the holy day."

The Sabbath raises questions in minds of fellow Christians, even our own people, and brings us back to Scripture. It is in the Bible that we find support for our theology and its practice. It is in Genesis and Exodus that we find the seventh day of the week as sacred remembrance of God's creativity. It is in Deuteronomy that we find the seventh day a sacred remembrance of God's deliverance of His people from their captivity. It is in Ezekiel that we find the seventh day a sacred remembrance of His covenant with His people. It is in Luke that we find the seventh day a part of Christ's covenant keeping.

It is Scripture which is our final authority that commands us to reach, touch, and teach Christ's way. It is our commission to be instruments of His grace—to care. **SR**

Ernest Bee is executive director of the SDB Board of Christian Education, Alfred Station, New York.



Welcome to the inverted triangle

by John Peil

As Paul writes his second letter to the church at Corinth, he is arguing with them over hierarchy—who is in charge of the church? Paul is saying, "I am the leader," and the people are saying, "Perhaps." They are working this thing out with each other. This happens in every group. There has to be a hierarchy in all living organizations or they descend into chaos.

The hierarchy of our Seventh Day Baptist denomination is like an inverted triangle. This is not my idea. Fifteen years ago when I was preparing for the ministry, I went to Summer Institutes, and every year one of our leaders would explain it to me. As a young pastor I was fascinated because all the lay people are at the top. The wide layer at the top is the people, and beneath them are the boards and agencies who do the people's collective will. At the bottom are your pastors.

In the local church you have the congregation at the top. The middle layer of the triangle is your diaconate, or board of directors, or advisory council, and then the pastor at the bottom. The church functions democratically and we vote. This seemed like a good arrangement to me as long as I was a lay person, but then I became a seminary student. Here I was preparing to be a leader, and the lay people already had the job. I began to run into that inverted triangle as a reality, not just something that we draw on blackboards. It really does exist.

I have pastors call me and say, "John, I don't understand. I have 11 and 12-year-olds who are members of my church and they've got more control than I do. They're

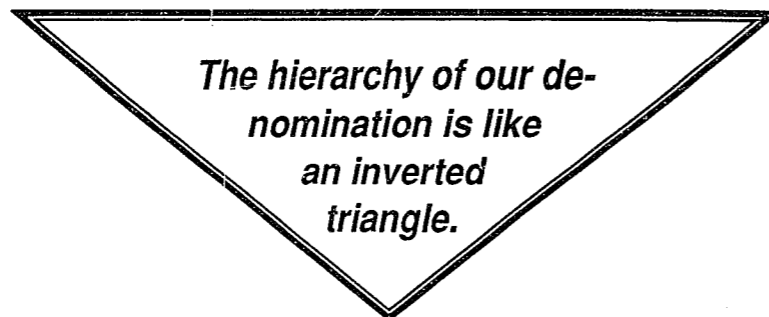
voting just like their parents." I say, "Welcome to the inverted triangle." A 12-year-old is just about old enough to know when to bathe and how to eat regularly and he has more power than the pastor. That is reality. We have to deal with that reality. We have to make this kind of hierarchy function.

Sometimes the lay people have all the power and no responsibility, and the pastor has all the responsibility and no power. That position

you give me."

Now, I have a good diaconate, so they went to work and formed a church committee which called me in and we hammered out a solution. I looked at it and said, "Yes, I can live with that." Then the committee took it to the business meeting. Here is what we came up with.

They were true to their Seventh Day Baptist polity. They kept the inverted triangle and left the



takes a great deal of personal strength. I have come into my 40s and discovered that I am weak. I need glasses, I need crowns on all my teeth. I'm out of shape. I went out to my garage to lift some weights and get back in shape and discovered it didn't matter, I'm not going to look good anymore. Some of you are old enough to know what I mean.

I said to myself, "I'm a weak man. I don't know if I can handle all this responsibility." So I went to my church and said to them, "Listen, I can't handle having all the responsibility and no power. Even them up. Just give me the power to match the responsibility." They thought I wanted to become a dictator. They said, "How much power do you want?" And I replied, "Power is not the issue. I want my responsibilities to match the power

congregation at the top to decide church matters in a democratic business meeting. Directly beneath that they placed the diaconate. Then they changed the bottom of the triangle.

Instead of one pastor responsible for the function and well being of the church, there are several boxes with equal but different responsibilities. There's a Sabbath School superintendent, an organist, a host committee chairman, church officers, and other committees, and among those boxes is one marked counselor/preacher. This box was made to fit my abilities. The church said to me, "John, your responsibility is to counsel. If we have any crises in our families, if our children are having any trouble, then you are going to counsel them. If there's someone in the hospital, someone in grief, you are going to

counsel. You are also going to bring the Sabbath morning sermon. You will do these two things and we will leave your pay the same." That's an important point.

I told my church, "I can handle that. I have the power, the ability, to counsel. I will study to preach as well as I can." Now I know what to do. When I go to seminars, I don't go to church growth seminars, I go to counseling seminars, because that's my job. I want to be good at it.

If my church decides they don't have enough young adults, what should they do? You know it's easy to pick on the pastor. You make a little innuendo. "Gee, the church down the road has 50 young adult couples—they're just flocking in." You spread this comment out into the air, speaking to no one in particular, but the pastor is sitting there and he feels the heat. Suddenly he has an anxiety attack.

Perhaps some of you don't have much stress in your life, or you handle it better than I do. But I am weak. I have lain in my bed at night, my stomach sounding like a drum because it is growling. I toss and turn. I can handle only so much of this because I am older now; I am in my 40s. But now there is a solution for this problem. If my church makes an innuendo, I don't listen. I am the counselor and the preacher. If they want young adult couples in their church there are lay people who have that responsibility and that power.

Right now my church is growing. A young adult in the church said, "I want a strong youth fellowship," so she went out and worked on building up the YF. I gave her my blessing. She's working and the YF is growing. I feel good about this. I don't have a nervous stomach and I don't have any anxiety attacks. My job is to counsel and to preach. If

after she brings all those young people they say, "We're not coming back because the preaching stinks," then I have a problem. But I am not helpless. I have the power to get around that problem. I can devise solutions for it.

Another person has come into my church and said, "We need to evangelize everybody!" I gave her my blessing and said, "You are free to go. Bring in 200, I've got room for them." She didn't like that and said, "Where are you going to be?" I replied, "I will be counseling and preaching." She would not go and evangelize then. It wasn't really what she wanted to do.

Human beings are fascinating. We can see ourselves in a child. If they are angry and we give them a block, they just throw it down. Perhaps your children didn't act this way, but mine did. They throw the blocks and finally throw themselves on the floor and yell.

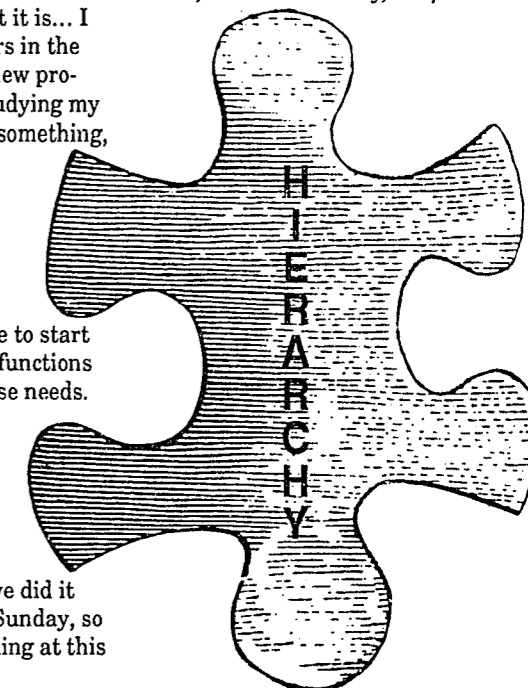
As adults we are more sophisticated, but we still do this. We say to the pastor, "I am disgruntled today. I don't know what it is... I want 1,000 new members in the congregation, I want a new program; I want to start studying my Bible every day. I want something, but I don't know what it is. I'm just disgruntled today. I won't be tomorrow, but I am today, so get moving, do something." Then it is time for that inverted triangle to start working. The hierarchy functions and takes care of all those needs.

A man came into my church and said, "John, in my last church, my pastor went out with me and helped to feed the indigent in soup kitchens. It was great, we did it from 1:00 to 6:00 every Sunday, so when do we start?" Looking at this

good man I thought, "That pastor took you out as you requested and did all that work and now you're here in my church." And the second thought, "Don't forget the blessing." So I said, "Bless you, go." But he didn't go. That wasn't really what he wanted or he would have done it. He did find a ministry that he could handle in the church and he is doing it well. Wouldn't it have been pathetic to have done as this man asked, then have him leave the church in six months because that wasn't answering his real need?

Let the hierarchy function. Let us each use our own abilities that God has given us the power to use. We can be happy in a church like that and share the joy of worship together. We are safe in our covenant, working at the tasks we are empowered to do; no one is putting unwieldy demands upon us. Safe, secure, and working peacefully. SR

John Peil pastors the SDB Church of Faith, San Gabriel Valley, California.



Local church, Conference, or Holy Spirit?

by Paul Osborn

I remember some years ago when my friend and fellow pastor, Rev. S. Kenneth Davis, in the midst of a heated debate on the Conference floor declared, "It doesn't make any difference what you do here. When we get back to Daytona Beach, we'll do as we please!" Now that is local church autonomy!

Don Sanford reported another good story of local autonomy (self-government) in his article, "Expand Your Covenant." A Southern Baptist pastor called his denomination's office to hear the receptionist say, "Southern Baptist Headquarters." "No, I'm calling from Headquarters, I want someone from the office!" he exploded.

At first, it was difficult for me to say "denomination" when referring to our Seventh Day Baptist General Conference. That, to me, indicated control from the top down, rather than from the church up! I know now that words must be used as they are understood by others, but I still like to use the term "Conference" when referring to SDBs and their organization.

I once served a church that was having a disagreement on the type of organization that should be in operation (ruling elders vs. congregational vote—a variation of the denominational control vs. local church autonomy). To help determine the Seventh Day Baptist position on the subject, I asked the Center for information. I was given a syllabus on the Summer Institute course for "Seventh Day Baptist Polity." Taking it home I opened it eagerly to find what it would say, for surely it would have a biblical basis. What did I find? A statement that said, "Read the New Testa-

ment." No short cuts there.

So I read the New Testament, at least the parts that I thought were pertinent to church organization and polity. I found that the early New Testament Church was *one*, and yet each local congregation was expected to appoint its own leadership. That's the implication I find in Acts 14:23, where "ordained" can also be translated as "chosen," and 1 Timothy 3:14-15, where Paul

No statements such as, "Why don't they...?" or "I wish they would..." can be excuses; "they" are "us." As Pogo once said, "We have met the enemy, and he is us!"

It is also true that the local population will have a better knowledge of their own circumstances and problems, as well as the needs of the community. I am convinced that the best thing a "denomination" (or general confer-

The best thing a "denomination" can do is provide tools to help the local church.

gives instructions on "how men ought to conduct themselves in God's household." The Councils seemed to have only an advisory capacity. The organization was not forced, but they cooperated for the sake of the witness.

It is quite obvious in the New Testament that the apostles exercised a good deal of authority because of their special relationship with Jesus while He was on earth. It also seems clear that they accepted Paul as a fellow apostle because he was called of God. But that did not mean that the apostle's actions were not questioned or examined. And even the leaders did not always agree.

But we started out to talk about the strengths and weaknesses of local church autonomy. First, the advantages.

Under local church autonomy, the local congregation is responsible for its own birth and growth (and demise). The members must work for their survival as a church.

ence) can do is provide tools to help the local church evaluate and learn how to be the church where they are. Indians tried not to judge another until they had walked a mile in the other's moccasins. It is much better for a pastor to live in a community for a year before any changes are suggested.

Seventh Day Baptist churches used to be quite successful in calling one of their own members to "preach and pastor." Such an individual would know and be known by the congregation much better than a denominational (or Conference) officer would.

Other advantages of local church autonomy would seem to be derived from the old "selfish" motives. Giving physical or financial support for one's local church is much easier because we can see the need and see the results. But to send the money to a central treasurer to have it used in remote places gives some people pause.

Are there disadvantages of local

church autonomy?

"No prophet is without honor except in his own country." Thus we must import good pastors who can look at the local situation with an unprejudiced eye.

But many times the local congregation cannot find the kind of pastor that is needed in their situation. Or, if they do find one with just the right blend of gifts to match their needs, they cannot possibly support such a qualified pastor. Yes, many times the local congregation does know its own capacity and problems. It is also true that they do not always have the resources to develop answers for their problems. And they do not always have the expertise to evaluate various options for action.

Especially in planting new congregations, the expertise of the Conference will save time. The local congregation does not have to "re-invent the wheel" each time it duplicates itself. I submit that one local congregation duplicating itself in another geographical center is similar to "Conference control."

Another serious weakness of local church autonomy is the impracticability of the local congregation fulfilling Christ's Great Commission to evangelize the whole world. Though the great missionary work of the church began small (see Acts 13) there are now many more problems in going to other countries.

Perhaps the most serious weakness of local church autonomy is the people themselves. In too many churches I have observed strong-willed individuals wanting to run the organization for their own benefit rather than for the glory of God. The benefit of the congregational form of government is that the Holy Spirit can make God's will known many times in spite of one or two individuals who may be "out of touch." But in a congregation

where a powerful personality is bowed to, the influence of the Holy Spirit is negligible unless that individual is Spirit-filled.

Of course the same complaint can be made in denominational personnel, too. And pity the poor denominationally-controlled church if a selfish individual gets in the position of authority. Quite obviously, we need each other.

I believe that congregational

Congregational government is the best way for a church to operate.

government with local church autonomy is the best way for a church to operate, even with all its weaknesses. The Holy Spirit works through the individual members of the Body of Christ, and that is the only way that God's work for the church will be accomplished. We might set and achieve goals and dreams, but unless they agree with God's plan and work, we fail to accomplish the task for which we are called.

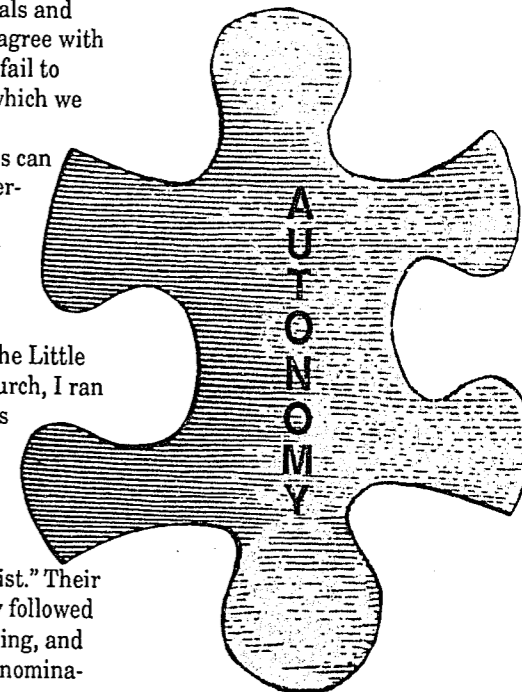
Most of the weaknesses can be solved by proper Conference cooperation; and who is to say that the General Conference can't be controlled by the Holy Spirit?

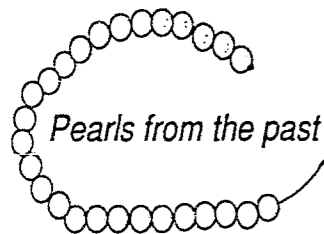
When I was pastor of the Little Rock, Arkansas, SDB Church, I ran across a group of churches that called themselves "The Church of Christ." There were several independent congregations, and each one was called the same: "Church of Christ." Their pastors stressed that they followed the New Testament teaching, and so they did not have a "denomina-

tion," for they found no reference to such in their Bibles. They would query me about our Seventh Day Baptist General Conference, asking, "Where do you find that denomination (meaning organization) in the New Testament?" I would reply, "Where do you find all those brick churches you're building all over town?" "Oh," they would reply, "we need them for our work!" "Exactly the same reason we have our Seventh Day Baptist General Conference. We need it for our work!"

Local church autonomy does not rule out the advantages of the Conference-controlled church. All the advantages can be ours as a Seventh Day Baptist General Conference when we learn to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, trust other Christians, and all work toward the goal of world evangelization, building up the Kingdom of God on earth! **SR**

Paul Osborn pastors the SDB Church of Albion, Wisconsin.





Pearls from the past

Denominational organization in a commercial age

by Don A. Sanford, historian

Several of the leading men of the denomination at the turn of the 20th century were leaders in business and industry. George Babcock, Charles Potter, J.F. Hubbard, and Charles Chipman were well known and highly respected in business, finance, and public service in the New York metropolitan area (which included Plainfield, New Jersey). Successful executives from other places also contributed much to the leadership of the denomination near the turn of the century.

Denominational economy

The president of the 1890 General Conference was Henry D. Babcock, president of the Babcock Manufacturing Company in Leonardsville, New York. He noted that in many ways our denomination is more of a "household of faith" than any other Christian sect. Therefore, economy ought to characterize us, for the word economy originally meant the management of a household, and our denominational household ought to be well managed. Yet, as he pointed out:

"In the management of our denominational work we fail to carry out those principles of economy which should prevail in every home, in every business establishment, and most of all in our denominational business."

A call for readjustment

The General Conference session in 1902 is best remembered for its centennial celebration of General Conference. Yet in the midst of reminiscing the past, action was taken to look toward the future.

The Pre-Conference Council, made up of representatives from the denominational societies, boards, institutions of learning, and Conference proper, made recommendations with an eye to the future. They stated:

"...the time has come for some adjustment of our denominational organization with reference to an increase of unity and strength in all our denominational life and action, and we commend the subject to the careful consideration of Conference."

Action was subsequently taken to call an Advisory Council of

continued action, but its most significant work was largely centered around the question "How?"—how could the objectives be achieved? Individual churches were not represented. Instead, the composition of the Council was drawn from among the people most directly charged with implementing denominational programs. Therefore, the matter of organization was important to them.

Out of that Council came the conclusion that "a closer union of denominational organization should be accomplished by some form of merging or federating all our denominational lines of work, provided legal obstacles can be

Successful executives contributed much to the leadership of the denomination.

representatives from various boards, agencies, committees, associations, and colleges which were involved in the administration of denominational programs to "take into consideration and report means and methods of unifying and strengthening our denominational interests and work."

The Alfred Council

The Council met in Alfred, New York, in December 1902. Its goals were similar to that of the Chicago Council of the previous decade, for it began its report with concern for evangelism, Sabbath promotion, recruitment of workers, and increased enthusiasm throughout the denomination. There were many of the same commendations of work done with encouragement for

overcome."

Yet in spite of all this effort and the optimism of some, the separate reports of the Missionary Society, the Education Society, and the American Sabbath Tract Society indicated obstacles which led to the conclusion adopted by Conference "that while the merging of the three denominational Societies with the General Conference would be legally possible, to attempt such merging is not advisable or practicable."

Some structural changes were recommended which more clearly defined the powers of the officers, made members of the societies members of General Conference by virtue of such membership, and specified the way in which the Societies should report to Confer-

1902 Alfred Council:

"A closer union of denominational organization should be accomplished by some form of merging..."

ence. Conference also proposed a nine-member Executive Committee composed of the president, the recording and the corresponding secretaries, along with six other members elected by Conference for three year staggered terms.

Commission established

The president of General Conference in 1912, Boothe C. Davis, made efficiency a major emphasis in his address. He applied the mechanical engineer's definition of efficiency, "the ratio of useful work to the energy expended," to the denomination and found it lacking in many places.

Three significant actions were prompted by his address. First there was a proposal to include the vice presidents and treasurer as *ex officio* members of the Executive Committee.

A second proposal was the creation of a Committee on Denominational Activities composed of seven members, "one each representing the six boards who was somewhat of an expert on the work of the board, and one person who, as far as possible, is an all-around denominational worker and expert who shall be chairman." Much of the action of General Conference for the next decade came to the floor of Conference through this important Committee which served a function similar to later Reference and Counsel Committees.

A third recommendation growing out of this concern for efficiency was the establishment of a Commission of the Executive Committee.

The first Commission of the Executive Committee included the president, the vice-president (who was one of the members elected for a three-year term), the recording secretary and the treasurer of Conference, plus five former presidents. By 1916, the Commission of the Executive Committee was still largely composed by *ex officio* members including the past presidents and the presidents of the Missionary and the Tract Societies.

Changes in the Commission

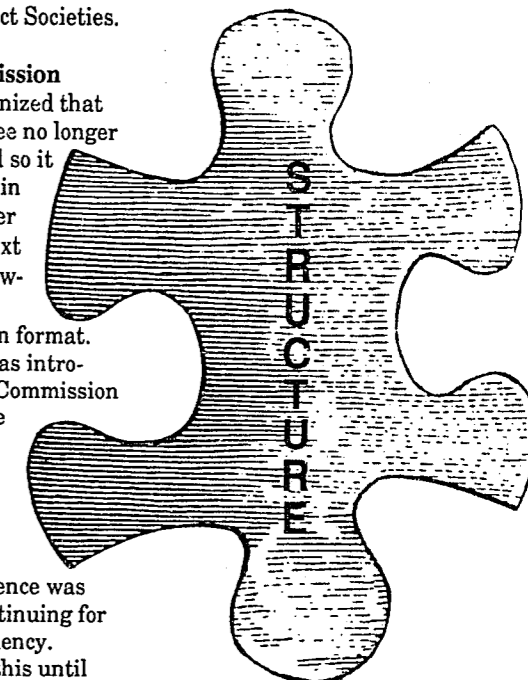
By 1920 it was recognized that the Executive Committee no longer served any function and so it was officially abolished in favor of the nine-member Commission. For the next decade this newly empowered Commission functioned without change in format.

In 1936 a proposal was introduced to cut the size of Commission to six, composed of three members elected for three-year terms, and continuing the three representatives from the societies and board. The president of Conference was also to be a member continuing for one year after his presidency. Action was deferred on this until

the 1938 Conference when a Council Committee on Denominational Administration recommended a Commission "composed of six members, consisting of pastors and laymen, of whom the president of General Conference shall be one." Although the societies and board were omitted from membership, they were expected to be available for consultation. This six member Commission continued as the basic administrative body of Conference "between sessions" until 1978.

An executive secretary is employed

It was not until 1951 that a suggestion of the 1918 Commission was fully enacted as Conference voted to hire an executive secretary "to provide administrative leadership in program planning, activating the program through inter-agency coordination, and budget promotion." Nearly two years later



Denominational organization, cont.

in May, 1953, A. Burdett Crofoot was hired and served the position until his untimely death in November 1955. He was succeeded by Doris Fetherston (1956-61), Harley Bond (1961-64), Alton Wheeler (1965-75), K. Duane Hurley (1975-1981) and Dale Thorngate (1981-1990). The nature of the office varied with each person holding the position. In 1965, it was voted that "in keeping with the scope of purpose, function, and duties" of the office, the name should be changed to that of general secretary. Ten years later the name of the office reverted to that of executive secretary.

Part of the reason for this change can be attributed to a change in personnel, but it would

polity remained, as was evidenced by other actions of Conference.

General Council is formulated

Ministers' Conference of 1975 provided the stimulus for one more self-study or analysis of priorities of effort within the denomination. This study initiated steps which led to the formation of a General Council three years later.

An *ad hoc* committee representing a cross-section of denominational personnel recommended the formation of a task force to study and report back specific changes which might make the work more efficient and effective.

After considerable research, consultation, and input from individuals, churches, and socie-

ties, the task force reported six areas of concern in terms of 1) structure; 2) accounting procedures; 3) relationship of boards, agencies, and General Conference; 4) continuing study; 5) location of headquarters; and 6) leadership

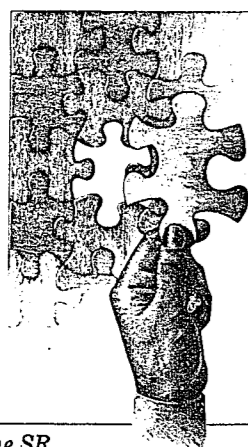
and attitudes. Action was taken to establish a General Board to replace the Commission, but details of the organization were referred to an *ad hoc* committee consisting of three members of the task force, three from the Commission, and three from the societies affected by the change. Their study reflected a surge of optimism growing out of a "Commitment to Growth" program undertaken in consultation with John Wimber and the Fuller Evangelistic Association.

After nearly two years of further discussions and refinement, Conference adopted in 1978 the establishment of the General Council to replace the Commission. This new form in essence retained the at-large concept of six elected members including the president and president-elect, and added the employed executives of the major boards and agencies and the president of the Women's Board. The Executive Secretary holds a non-voting *ex officio* position. The at large members constitute an executive committee in matters of personnel employment, whereas the representatives of boards and agencies are a Coordinating Leadership Team for program and budgeting recommendations. *S.R.*

Not until 1951 was a suggestion from 1918 fully enacted.

also appear that there was a continuing difficulty in defining the function of an administrative position within an organization which remained basically advisory. The fundamental questions of authority within congregational

ties, the task force reported six areas of concern in terms of 1) structure; 2) accounting procedures; 3) relationship of boards, agencies, and General Conference; 4) continuing study; 5) location of headquarters; and 6) leadership



To help put the puzzle together, turn to the denominational chart on pages 14-15.



SR Almanac

Where we have been...

One year ago—February 1989

Brazil's Theological Education by Extension begins. Missionary Society votes to implement COSAR salary guidelines in support of their workers.

Editor D. Scott Smith, after six and a half years of service, presents his final editorial.

Growth and activity continues at the Houston and Wichita Falls, Texas, churches.

Five years ago—February 1985

SDB United Relief Fund aids the hungry in Ethiopia and other emergencies in Peru and India.

Celebration of Lord's Acre Sabbath noted from Nortonville, Kansas.

Plea to rebuild a local church comes from Burma.

New extension team appointed to coordinate the growing field work in Florida.

10 years ago—February 1980

A new Department of Music Services proposed by Light Bearers member Art Rowe.

Good reports from "Word of Truth" radio outreach in Washington, D.C.

SDBs from Mozambique, restricted by their government, cannot attend Conference in Malawi.

Ceremony opens Clifford A. Beebe Memorial Home at Sunshine Mountain, Chatawa, Mississippi.

Family retreats held in upstate New York and Daytona Beach, Florida.

25 years ago—February 1965

Billy Graham's sermon for President Lyndon Johnson's inauguration presented.

Articles by then-students and future Conference presidents, Herbert Saunders and Althea Greene (Rood), are printed.

A call to missionary service in British Guiana extended to Rev. Leroy Bass.

Board of Christian Education prints, "The Christian Answer to Life's Urgent Problems."

Recorder survey question: "What is your sex? Please check." One answer submitted: "I already know."

50 years ago—February 1940

Alfred University register shows 30 SDBs out of the 630 students; only 11 gave no church preference.

A call to enroll in World-Wide Fellowship of Prayer.

Sixty-year minister, Rev. E.A. Witter, calls for closer relations between young and old members.

Milton College professor Edwin Shaw proposes that "it is inevitable that without SDB colleges, the denomination will soon cease to exist..."

Prohibition items from the National Voice News Bureau: On liquor traffic through state-owned stores—"...many good boys are influenced to commit atrocious crimes that they would not otherwise think of doing—crimes for which the state murders them (by electrocution)." On liquor licenses—"A license does not create a vested right, but is merely a temporary permit."

75 years ago—February 1915

Busy quarter for E.B. Saunders, corresponding secretary for the Missionary Society: "Your secretary has visited 17 of our churches; spoken on missions 15 times, in all 30 times; written and sent out 300 communications and received 275; traveled 5,000 miles."

Rev. Ira Lee Cottrell resigns his pastorate at Second Alfred (Alfred Station), New York, church. In nearly six years, 100 members were added.

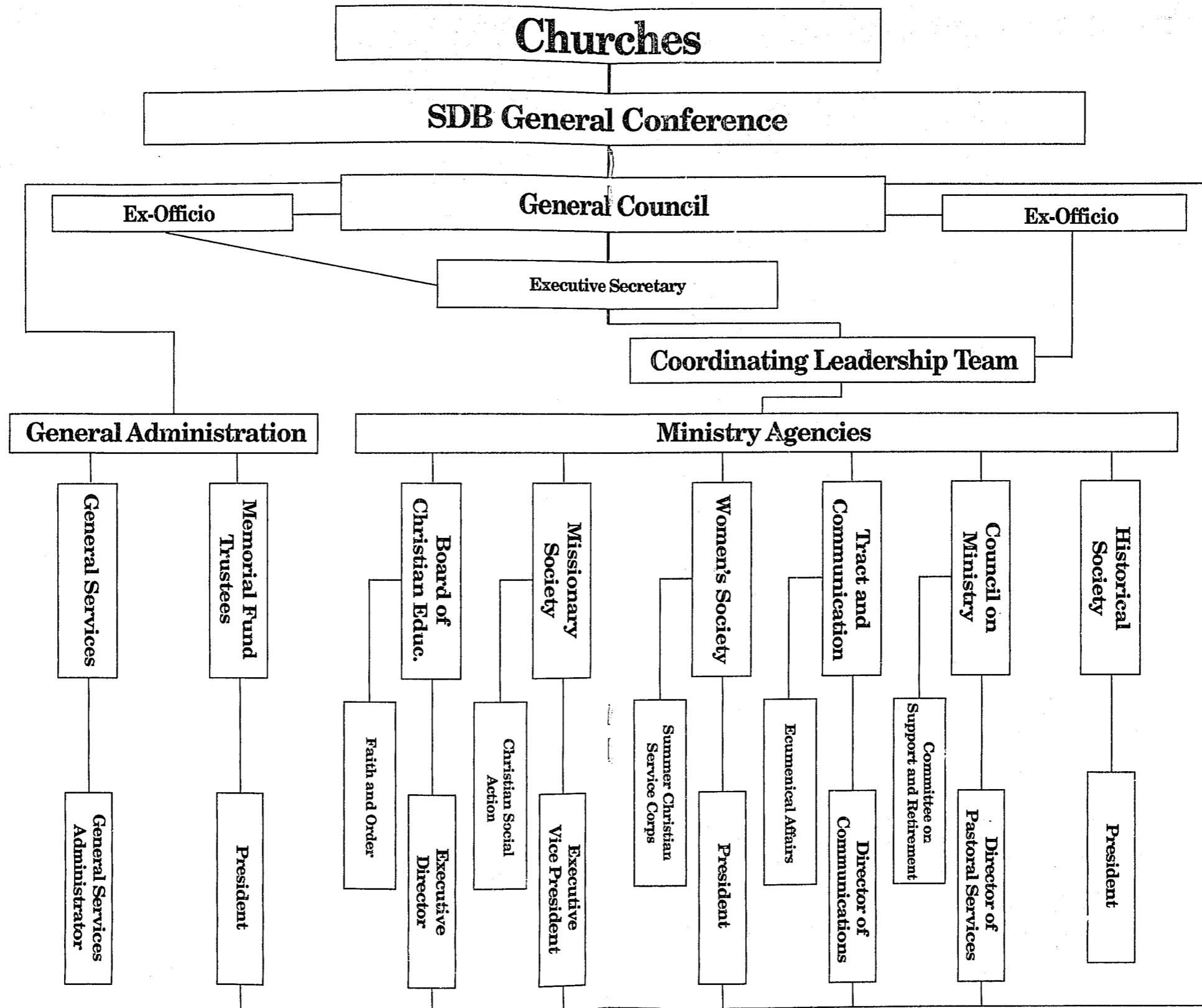
Editor Theodore Gardiner says "good-bye" to the old Potter press ("for some time it has shown signs of growing decrepitude"), and "welcome" to the new press ("gift of C.B. Cottrell's Sons, the printing press men of Westerly, R.I.").

...where are we headed?

Pray...

- for the education of our future leaders
- that relief efforts reach the needy
- for our media outreach
- for a strengthened prayer life
- that our families unite in Christ
- for our lone Sabbathkeepers
- for spiritual and physical church growth

Seventh Day Baptist Denominational Structure



From the executive secretary's desk

We are therefore Christ's ambassadors

by Dale D. Thorngate

Many metaphors in the Bible describe the Christian life. The metaphor most used by Christ was, "the Kingdom of God." When we think of ourselves as citizens of the Kingdom of God, then the image of "the Ambassador" is a powerful one for us.

In this day of instant communication, we are able to see our U.S. ambassadors in action around the world. I remember watching our ambassador to Vietnam being lifted out of the embassy by helicopter on the day we ceased to be involved in that war.

Just recently we observed the situation in Panama deteriorate to the point that our President sent in

that, "God reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation... We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us."

We remember the story of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, and the impact that had on us as we accepted Christ as our Lord and Savior. We committed ourselves to be his disciples (another powerful metaphor). It's one thing to be a follower and learner of Jesus. It is quite another to receive the commission of ambassador.

When I think about being an ambassador, I think of world travel. I think of important high-

Donnelly tells us, "A curious paradox occurs when this is done. Even though our primary goal as ambassadors of reconciliation is peace, the path of reconciliation is frequently through conflict and confrontation."

Therefore, our lives as believers will be like the ambassadors in the secular world. Although we may not have to be rescued by helicopter or protected by military troops to accomplish our tasks, there will be days when the spiritual warfare may be just as dangerous and life-threatening. After all, the peace we seek is an eternal peace. And many who do not hear the word of "reconciliation" may lose their lives for eternity.

This month *The Sabbath Recorder* is focusing on Seventh Day Baptist polity. That's a fancy word for organization. As Baptists we believe in three basic polity principles: 1) Soul freedom; 2) Priesthood of all believers; and 3) Autonomy of the church. These principles are only valid if all three are in place. Also, they are only valid if the structure supports a well-trained and committed staff of "Ambassadors for Christ."

Without the purpose of reconciliation and a staff committed to bringing the good news of forgiveness, peace, and love, no polity structure is worthy of our support. My prayer is that we never lose sight of our purpose or the responsibility of our commission.

"We implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

"We are therefore Christ's ambassadors." **S_R**

level meetings. And I think of responsibility and power. Ambassadors are important people but only because they have important tasks to perform and significant messages to convey.

In the January/February *Weavings*, Doris Donnelly explains, "Reconciliation is God's dream for the world. It involves restoring broken relationships, healing our deepest wounds, transforming hearts in the peace of Christ."

If, then, we are ambassadors for Christ, we have a very important task to perform. We are to bring God's message of peace, love, repentance, and forgiveness to others—those not yet citizens of God's Kingdom.

***It's one thing to be a follower
and learner of Jesus.
It is quite another to receive the commission
of ambassador.***

military troops to capture their nefarious leader. We watched the ambassador return to the embassy, then saw that man relieved, and a new ambassador appointed to give strength to the relationship between the United States and the new government in Panama.

The office of ambassador is a powerful one. He represents the president, or king, or ruler of a particular country. What he says in any negotiations between countries is accepted as what the actual leader would have said. To question his integrity is to question the integrity of the country he represents.

In Paul's second letter to the Corinthian church, we are told

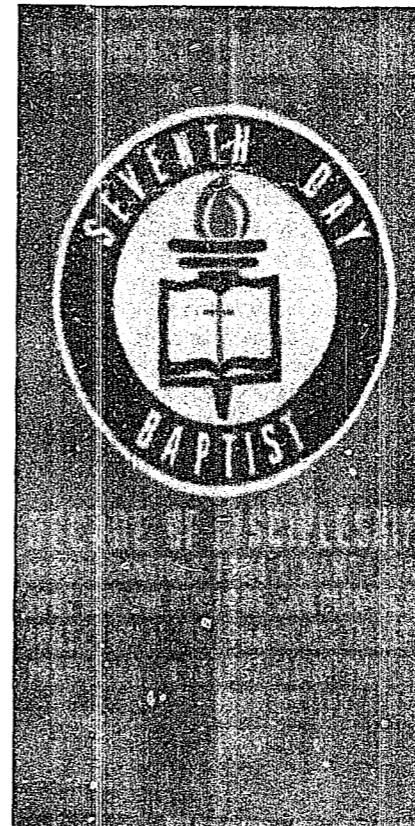


FOCUS
on Missions

by Leon R. Lawton

Church Growth, USA

The decade of the 80s was a time of measuring our growth, following the Commitment to Growth emphasis in the mid-70s. The Growingest Church banner has been presented each year at Conference, for the previous calendar year. Those churches receiving recognition have been: 1980—Memphis, Tennessee; 1981—Sunshine Mountain, Mississippi; 1982—Central, Maryland; 1983—Houston, Texas; 1984—Atlanta, Georgia; 1985—San Diego, California; 1986—Wichita Falls, Texas; 1987—Blountville, Tennessee; 1988—Doniphan, Missouri. Forty-one churches reported in the 1989 "Accessions" column of the *Recorder*, listing 263 new members received. For the last year of the decade we again honor the church having the greatest percentage of growth: 1989—Lake Elsinore, California! Congratulations! The January *Missions* gave the statistics.



The Growingest Church banner featured at Conference '89.

Chipho, Malawi, Africa

The new clinic building planned for a rural area was expanded in size to meet the tremendous need of tens of thousands of Mozambique refugees in the area. It will include a small maternity ward with an outpatient clinic that anticipates serving greater numbers than the Makapwa Station hospital. A new and growing SDB congregation at Chipho met for months in a small booth but will use part of the clinic building on Sabbaths. Pray for the pastor and medical workers as they witness and minister.

New Life, Durham, CT, USA

This branch of the Waterford, Connecticut, SDB church meets regularly each Sabbath in the fellowship hall of the Episcopal church. Their pastor, James Galanaugh, was called before an ordination council on January 14, with a possible ordination service the first Sabbath of February. During the week, Pastor Galanaugh and members host young people at a nearby primary school for games and devotions. Over 50 are being served regularly.

Nellore, AP, India, Asia

On November 11, 1989, a severe cyclone hit the east coast of India and devastated areas where there were many Seventh Day Baptist churches. In December, \$3,000 from the SDB United Relief Fund was sent to B. Kishor Kumar, executive of the SDB Conference of India, to help meet human need and perhaps restore some of the damaged structures.

Area Spiritual Workshops—1990, USA

There will be no workshops this year due to financial resources and leadership need. For several decades these have been sponsored by the Missionary Society on even numbered years, while Pastors' Conference, sponsored by the Council on Ministry, is held on odd numbered years. Pastors' Conference is being planned for 1991.



Women's Society *News & Ideas* by Marilyn Merchant

Love at the heart of this structure

Dear Ones All,

"Will you be my valentine?"

Do you know where that came from? There is not a great deal known about the real St. Valentine. It is believed that he was martyred in Rome about 270 A.D. While in prison, the story goes, Valentine was befriended by his jailer's daughter. On the eve of his execution, Valentine thanked her for her care and kindness in a note signed, "Your Valentine." And so was born our tradition for exchanging such notes. It is a way of expressing love and caring for each other.

How in the world can we tie that into the theme for this issue of the *Recorder*, "Seventh Day Baptist polity/structure on the local and denominational level?" The temptation is very strong to leave it to those much more versed along those lines, but try I must, so bear with me.

Polity is the form or system of

government for a denomination. Love is one of the overriding principles in our polity; not any romantic or sentimental love, but deep, abiding caring for the individual as Christ cared for us. This, I am sure, St. Valentine also expressed in that first thank-you note. We care, therefore we have the rules governing our churches and denomination to bring about the most benefit to each individual member and to the whole world.

Our structure

Now for structure. Our denomination is set up with the various boards and agencies which deal with their particular constituencies in matters of mutual concern. The Women's Board is concerned about every facet of women's interests. Each woman of the denomination is our concern. Even if you are not a member of a local society in your own church, you can participate in the Women's Interest Committee

at Conference each year, and thereby be a part of this greater effort to care, to love, and to pray for all of God's children.

It seems to me that the local churches (and, therefore, the denomination) have always counted on the women for a special level of love and caring. Perhaps the mothering instinct is the reason. But how we have come through over the years!

History shows that when the denominational budget was deeply lacking, they (then called Commission) contacted the Women's Board for help and a program was launched whereby each woman of the denomination was asked to give \$1 and become a member of the

Rosebud Society. They did and over the top we went.

Our service

Once again, such caring and love is being called upon to help raise the living standard of our retired pastors and their widows. The Pastor's Retirement Offering Project (PROP) serves all pastors born up to 1921. After that they are covered by a new retirement plan. Bless Sue McMillan's heart (no pun intended); there is money in the Memorial Fund to match every dollar raised for this purpose with \$2.

In the spirit of love and caring, the Women's Board voted to turn over the interest from our certificate of deposit in the amount of \$306 to start the ball rolling. Our project is to once again enlist every woman in the denomination to give at least \$1 to the Pastor's Retirement Offering Project that our older servants might live a mite more abundantly. Can you think of a more wonderful way to express the spirit of Valentine's Day? It is roughly estimated that there are about 3,000 women involved; this would mean in the area of \$9,000 for the fund. With a little push, societies might come up with special money-raising projects to boost it to \$10,000. Please get behind this and really put some muscle into it and show them we "Give to those who gave so much."

From our Society

Our Love Gift at Conference came to a total of \$3,160.50, and has been distributed according to the guidelines drawn up by the Women's Interest Committee. Our craft sale took in a little better than \$800 and the North Loup, Nebraska, Dr. Grace Society reports selling some of the leftovers for an additional \$57.25. This project

seems to be a winner, and, at the direction of the committee, will be repeated this year at Conference. Please be working on your donations and let's see if we can go over the \$1,000 mark. Remember the need for portability and interest. Also at the leading of the Inter-

Shiloh, New Jersey, baked for and made visits to the shut-ins in their church and community. They also refurbished the parsonage for their new pastor. This month they are studying, "Aquila and Priscilla: Partners in Marriage" (a loving program if I ever heard one).

Alfred, New York's, Opportunity Shop and Nortonville, Kansas', clothing bank are no less expressions of love working throughout the year. To round out these activities the four Northwest churches held a retreat for all ladies with a theme of "Love Is a Decision."

There is no doubt about it—women are loving, caring individuals more than just at Valentine's Day. We care deeply about each of you and pray you will find loving and caring deep within your soul, now and forever.

There is so much more to tell but no room. So, until next month, pray and study to show yourself approved by God. Whether you give your offering for PROP through your local church (be sure to mark it for that project), or send it through the Women's Board at 18064 Ivy St., Fontana, CA 92335, c/o Mrs. Ruby Hambleton, we will see it gets in promptly. I will keep you informed as much as possible of our progress.

Agape,

There is no doubt about it—women are loving, caring individuals more than just at Valentine's Day.

est Committee, the Women's Board is making inquiries about the feasibility and procedure of gaining college credits or units for Summer Christian Service Corps training and experience. Speaking of SCSC, the chairperson tells us she already has requests for four worker applications and one project. We are really anxious for the Board's last year in California to be a most successful one in the way of service.

From your society

I tried to find expressions of love and caring in service projects from the societies and here is what I found:

Little Genesee, New York, society answered roll-call with canned goods for the community Food Pantry and made scrapbooks, greeting cards, and lap robes for local nursing homes.

Daytona Beach, Florida, and Battle Creek, Michigan, societies both participate in health and sewing kits for Church World Service, and Daytona added a towel shower for the new parsonage bathroom. Hebron, Pennsylvania, ladies gave their health kits to the local jail inmates for Christmas. I've mentioned before the stuffed toys they make and give to young patients in the Emergency Room.

Robe of Achievement

The Women's Society is accepting nominations for the Robe of Achievement for 1990. Please be considering a woman in your church who meets these 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. 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, 1990



the BEACON

Produced by the Youth Committee of the Board of Christian Education
For and by members of the SDB Youth Fellowship February 1990

Camp Miles '89

by Mary Scott

Last summer, the Southwestern Association had their campsite at Camp Miles in Canfield, Arkansas, June 11-18. Association was held in Houston, Texas.

Because of the long drive from Houston to Canfield, not all of the campers and counselors arrived until Sunday night. There were 32 people in attendance including some new campers, counselors, and cooks. There were two new counselors, Pastor Bill Shobe and Clint Brown.

This year's theme was "Faith." Pastor Bill taught the classes in the morning and the evening. In the morning, he taught lessons with a classroom-type setting using definitions and comparisons. In the evening, he taught lessons with biblical characters including Abram, Gideon, and Peter as examples.

Sunday night the campers were told they could write down any question they wanted answered, and that Pastor Bill and Dan Richards would try to find the answers. We had until Thursday afternoon to get in all the questions for the "open forum" that night. Pastor Bill and Dan answered about 12 questions. Not bad!

This was the third year we performed a musical at camp. We tried something a little more contemporary, a musical called, "We Believe: A Rap On Our Faith." Now, I don't know about you all, but when I heard the "rap" I immediately said, "Oh No!" But I judged too quickly.

Director Dan Richards did a

superb job getting everyone "psyched up" about the musical. The songs were really exceptional. Although the message was as old as the land itself, but more important than life itself, the message of true faith (the kind that comes from trusting Jesus as our Lord and Savior) was presented in a fresh and insightful way. It took a lot of time and hard work but we all agreed that it was an awesome experience. We performed the musical Saturday night for a small turnout.

Besides the wonderful lessons and singing, we had craft time in which we would make jewelry out of paper, make plaques, or do whatever we felt like as long as it was something that pertained to crafts.

In addition, we had a lot of fun and exciting things at Campfire time. We played "If You Love Me, Smile"; and Sandy Boswell was the champ. We played an energetic game of "Fruit Basket Turnover."

Friday night we had our annual Testimony Service and quite a few people rededicated their lives. We gathered some ashes for next year as a symbol of all the people who will be there in spirit if not in body.

Sabbath morning we had a praise service after Pastor Bill gave a Sabbath School lesson. Sometimes it's nice to be able to sing your praises to God and not have to worry about anything else. I always grow closer to God at camp.

This was my fourth and last year as a camper and I must say that some of the best memories of my

cont. on next page

Faith as a little child

by Dan Richards

A couple of weeks ago I was reminded of this phrase when the Youth Group went to Houston to sing our musical from camp.

The night after the Sabbath, the Houston Church took all of us out to a park that had a lot of activities to keep us occupied. One activity was the water slides.

Now, this was a new experience for me. There I was, 36 years old, up on top of this big slide with kids from [—] yea size to [—] yea size, all saying, "Lay down on your back and go! It's great!" So, this is what I did.

Wow! What a ride! I wasn't expecting the speed. All of a sudden here comes a *dark tunnel*!! When I came out the other end of the tunnel I was upside down and sideways and then (while I'm trying to get straightened out) I'm dumped into a pool of water.

When I emerged from the water spitting and sputtering, I didn't say, "This is great." As I looked around, people just looked at me and laughed. As they helped me out of the water they asked, "Wasn't it great?" Well, I've got my pride you know, so I said, "Yeah, where are the stairs? Let's go again."

Then came a statement totally unexpected. "Take Tyler down with you." Now, for those of you who

don't know me, Tyler is my almost-1-year-old son.

I am sure that they wondered why I looked at them the way I did. There I was, water running off of me everywhere, having just experienced three heart attacks and they wanted me to take my baby down this... this... this thing?

After a lot of teaching of technique (secrets of the slide), I took my son in my arms and up the slide we went. I sat down on the slide, held him in my arms, laid back, and we were off. I kept remembering, "just sit up, you'll slow down." You know, they were right; but you don't just slow down—you stop. Now my biggest concern was to get going again, before we got run over. "Lord, please don't let the next person be a waterslide-a-manic." Well, after three stops along the way down, we made it, Tyler still lying back against my chest and ready to go again.

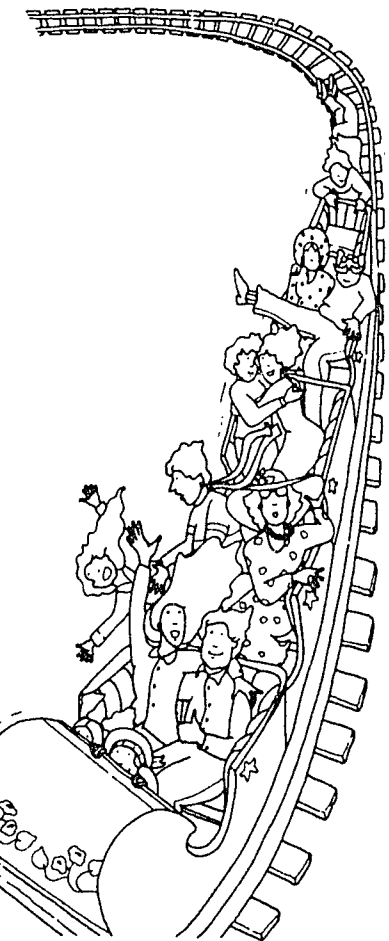
While driving the van home the next day, I got to thinking about the experiences of the night before. Tyler felt safe and secure in my arms and I didn't exactly understand why. But as I thought more about it the phrase came to my memory: "Faith as a little child."

Life has a tendency to throw us from here to there and up and down just like my first experience on the water slide. But Tyler's first experience on the water slide was a lot different. His faith in me keeping him safe was all he needed to know.

"Lesson Time!!" We need our

faith in God to be as a little child's faith. As Mark 10:16 says, "He took them in his arms and began blessing them." We can go through life in two ways: with God or without. No matter which way you decide to go, it is the same basic course. But in going through the course we will have different reactions, and at the end of the course there is a tremendous difference. Sink or rise above.

Dan Richards is advisor to the 1990 SDBYF officers. He and his wife, Dawn, are advisors to the Texarkana, Arkansas, YF.



Camp Miles, cont.

life are from my years at camp. I hope next year I can go as a counselor and continue to join in all the love and friendship of Camp Miles.

Mary Scott is the denominational YF secretary-treasurer and a member of the Texarkana, Arkansas, church. Her article first appeared in the July, 1989, issue of *The Milestone*.

FYI

Remember to send your

YF LOGO

and

New Name

Ballots to the

Seventh Day Baptist Board of Christian Education

Box 115

Alfred Station, NY 14803

by April 1, 1990

Month	Income (est)
December	\$749,433
November	\$686,983
October	\$624,530
September	\$562,077
August	\$499,624
July	\$437,171
June	\$374,718
May	\$312,265
April	\$249,812
March	\$187,359
February	\$124,906
January	\$62,453

1989 income needed—\$749,433.
Per month gift income needed—\$33,300.
Total needed each month—\$62,453.

The Denominational Budget... Our partnership in ministry

How is the money being used?

Meetings! Meetings! Meetings!

A substantial amount of money in the denominational budget pays for people to go to meetings. Our congregational polity calls for the broadest possible representation of our membership. Getting the group together is important. It is deemed necessary to discuss all of the needs, issues, and options. It is deemed important to cultivate meaningful working relationships. Seventh Day Baptists value it enough to pay for it.

The 12-member **General Council**, charged to "provide creative leadership and initiative for Seventh Day Baptists," acts for the Conference between sessions. It is to hold "at least two meetings a year" and its at-large members are to be "as widely distributed geographically as practicable."

Last month, the General Conference's **Council on Ministry (COM)** met to review both progress and plans for their work "to promote, educate and sustain the ordained ministry for Seventh Day Baptists." In addition to this winter date, COM also meets in connection with General Conference sessions.

Because of the hands-on nature of much of its work, "to provide informational and educational materials," the **Tract and Communication Council** has six members elected by Conference, and also includes chairmen of their four working committees: Publications, Sabbath Promotion, Audio-Visual and Sabbath Recorder. The full 10-member Council, mainly a policy-making and long-range planning group, meets annually, while a Core Committee of nearby members meets more frequently to consult on management matters.

The nine-member **Memorial Board** meets quarterly to carry out its task: to keep in trust, manage and distribute funds from gifts and bequests received for investment. The current board members are scattered from Texas to New York; Wisconsin to California.

Functioning quite differently from any of the others, the 16 members of the **Women's Society** all come from the same geographic area so that frequent meetings can be held at low cost. To balance representation and distribute the work load, the whole board is moved each decade.

To carry out its purpose of assisting local churches in their teaching and nurturing ministries, the **Directors of the Board of Christian Education** meet quarterly at the offices in Alfred Station, New York. Of the 20 Directors elected by the Board, 14 are nominated by Allegheny Association, and two each by Central New York, Eastern, and Pacific Coast Associations. Broader representation is achieved through location of one committee in California and through a number of consultants.

Similarly, the 33-member **Board of Managers of the Missionary Society** meets quarterly near their offices in Westerly, Rhode Island. The scope of overseas and home mission effort is represented in the four advisory committees: Home Field, Africa, Asia/Pacific, and Americas. Most managers, elected by the Society, are from Eastern Association, with wider representation achieved by locating two committees in other Associations.

Although none of its funding comes from the Denominational Budget, the **Historical Society** is related to the others through its function: to preserve and communicate Seventh Day Baptist heritage. Its five Directors, elected by the Society, meet annually at its offices in the SDB Center.

Three standing committees, **Faith and Order**, **Support and Retirement**, and **Christian Social Action**, elected by the Conference, meet periodically to carry out the tasks assigned to them. As with the larger agencies, each seeks unique ways to obtain input from the widest possible representation.

Pastor Profile

Name: Rev. Dale Eugene Rood

Birthdate and place:

March 8, 1944, Milton, Wisconsin

Current pastorate:

Dodge Center, Minnesota

Family:

Wife, Althea
Daughter, Kristin
Son, Jeffrey

Education:

B.A.--Milton College
M.Div.--Crozer Seminary

Former Pastorates/employment:

Pastor:
Waterford, Connecticut
Westerly, Rhode Island

My first job was:

Yard work at the home of a company executive while I was in high school.

Personal hero:

Margaret Thatcher

Favorite childhood memory:

As a boy in grade school--a day I spent with my father going to McDonald's to eat and then to the airport where we got an airplane ride with one of Dad's friends.

Favorite Bible passage:

Jeremiah 15:16

Favorite author:

Charles Colson

If given an all-expense paid vacation:

I would take a ride on the Orient Express, a three-week (at least) trip to



the Holy Land, hiking in the Rocky Mountains, or, or...

A great answer to prayer was:

Having two children, a boy and a girl, who are healthy and Christian; seeing people's lives change in direct response to prayer; seeing Andre Hawa miraculously and safely out of Lebanon.

A church project I'm excited about:

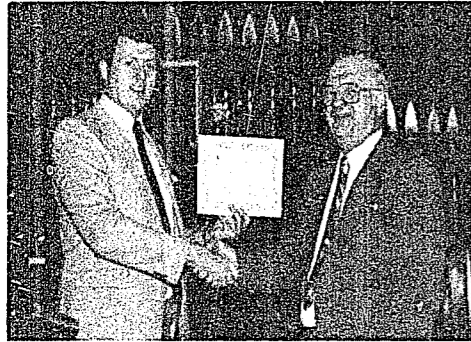
I am excited about relationship building so people can feel free to go to others to talk about deep concerns, and building up small group studies.

My vision for SDBs:

For new churches and more Seventh Day Baptists in the cities; for young people and young adults on fire for the Lord Jesus Christ; for love, joy, and deepening relationships with God and with each other.

Time in T.I.M.E. pays off

September 30, 1989, was the day that the SDB Council on Ministry had suggested for "Ministry Promotion Sabbath."



Kevin Butler (left) presents Rev. Gene Smith with his T.I.M.E. diploma.

The Adams Center, New York, church decided to promote not only ministry, but its minister. After four years of hard work, Pastor Gene Smith became one of the first graduates of the denomination's Training In Ministry and Extension (T.I.M.E.) program. Kevin Butler, director of communications for the Tract and Communication Council, challenged the church to reach out and minister in the northern New York community, and also gave praise to the pastor for his fine work and determination.

The worship theme showed how God calls us, prepares us, and empowers us for ministry and service. Butler stressed that to serve means to follow; to follow means to accompany a leader (Christ); and to follow means to share in a reward.

"Gene has worked hard and spent a lot of time in T.I.M.E. There has been much work, sacrifice, and following Jesus. It's time to share in a reward."

A graduation reception was held in the church basement following the worship celebration.

Gene has served in Adams Center since August 1985, and was ordained there in October 1988. *SR*

Family ties impress pastor

Last October's Mid-Continent Association meetings evoked not only exceptional attendance, but also these words from Pastor Ralph Grosser of the Denver church:

"I have been impressed again by the spirit of love which exists among SDBs. These are a people who genuinely enjoy being together. Perhaps the geographical distances required to travel only serves to up the value of these social times—in the same way that

a rare gem is valued more highly simply due to its rarity.

"But it goes deeper than that. The strong ties of history and the high regard for family heritage also create a special quality of fellowship among SDBs.

"This is a precious quality which I hope will never be lost. I can tell you from many years of experience elsewhere that few denominations radiate the genuine feelings of love and caring which were so evident here this past weekend." *SR*

SR Reaction

Dear Brother Butler,

Thank you for publishing a write-up in respect to the Free Eye Clinic Camp organized by us here last September.

The "Kevin's Korner" in the December issue makes one introspective. The pressure of modern times makes one forget the Covenants. A timely reminder and a warrant for one to search one's

heart. Life is lighted by His grace and the glare of that Light should not blind us to ignore those Covenants. May the Lord bless us to find His light in ourselves so that we abide by the pledges we made.

Yours in Christ,
B. Kishor Kumar, India

Alfred news

The Alfred, New York, SDB Church celebrated Christ's birth with a series of Advent luncheons in members' homes, and free-will offerings were received for special benevolences. A sacred concert of Christmas music was enjoyed at the church, courtesy of a local singing group. A guest organ recital is scheduled for early March featuring three organists.

We are pleased that Pastor Leon Wheeler has welcomed new members and associate members who wish to identify with our fellowship after Christian experience elsewhere.

Four of our families are completing new homes some miles outside the village.

Our ministry includes an Op-Shop which sells good used clothing and household items to students and temporary residents of our university community. This is under the direction of our Women's Society. *SR*

Accessions

Ashaway, RI
Harold King, pastor

Joined by letter
Rev. Harold King
Kathi King

Denver, CO
Ralph Grosser, pastor

Joined by letter
Katherine C. Davis

Plainfield, NJ
Joe Samuels, pastor

Joined after testimony
Irene Washington

Births

Roberts.—A daughter, Stephanie Christina Roberts, was born to Joseph T. and Wanda Roberts III of Ashaway, RI, on October 24, 1989.

Carminati.—A son, Joshiah David Carminati, was born to Stephen and Carolyn Carminati of Middletown, CT, on October 27, 1989.

Chroniger.—A daughter, Jessica Anne Chroniger, was born to Revs. Don and Charlotte Chroniger of Shiloh, NJ, on October 28, 1989.

Marriage

Richards-Cox.—Rev. Donald E. Richards and Geraldine Cox were united in marriage on September 3, 1989, at the Harrison Street United Methodist Church, Harrisville, WV, with the Rev. John Losh, the bride's pastor, officiating.

Obituaries

Stephan.—The Rev. E. Wendell Stephan, 68, of West Hartford, Connecticut, died on November 16, 1989, after a brief illness. Wendell, who was a native of Nortonville, Kansas, received his B.A. from Salem College, Salem, West Virginia, and his B.D. from Yale Divinity School. He began his ministry as pastor of the Seventh Day Baptist Church in Waterford, Connecticut, later serving as pastor of the Seventh Day Baptist Church in Plainfield, New Jersey.

Always concerned about the special needs of troubled families and the sick, he received extensive training in the new field of Clinical Pastoral Education. He served Creedmoor State Hospital in New York as chaplain and supervisor of Chaplaincy Services until 1957, when he was called to establish the Department of Pastoral Care and Training at Hartford Hospital. He directed the department from 1957 to 1977. During those 20 years, Chaplain Stephan inaugurated and helped to develop one of the leading Clinical Pastoral Education programs in the country, training over 500 pastors, priests, and other religious personnel in caring for the sick and troubled.

He also consulted with five area hospitals as they developed chaplaincy services, and he helped to found the Inter-Church Counseling Center of Greater Waterbury and the Pastoral Counseling Center of West Hartford. He taught numerous courses for health professionals and maintained a practice in marriage and family counseling, into which he moved full-time after leaving Hartford Hospital. He was still in active practice at the time of his death.

Wendell was a supervisor emeritus of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, a

clinical member of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists, and a fellow of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors. He also served on numerous committees and boards directing Clinical Pastoral Education, inter-church activities, and counseling education.

He is survived by his wife, Audrey; two daughters, Wendelyn Hoffman of Scituate, Massachusetts, and Patricia of Elmwood, Connecticut; and two granddaughters.

Funeral services were held on November 22, 1989, at the Seventh Day Baptist Church, Waterford, with burial in the church cemetery. A memorial service was held on December 5, 1989, at South Congregational Church, Hartford. The Dillion-Baxter Funeral Home, Wethersfield, Connecticut, was in charge of arrangements.

Mittong.—Audra Pauline Mittong, 84, of Cherry Camp Run, Salem, West Virginia, died on November 24, 1989, at the United Hospital Center.

Audra was born on August 12, 1905, in Jackson Center, Ohio, the daughter of Samuel Curtis and Edna (Davis) Groves. A 1930 graduate of Salem College, she continued her education at Virginia Polytechnic Institute. She taught 17 years in Ohio and 23 years at Gore and Sardis Junior High Schools in Harrison County, West Virginia, before retiring in 1969.

For many years, she was a member of the Jackson Center Seventh Day Baptist Church, where she officiated at the pipe organ at Sabbath services. Audra was a member of the National Teachers Association, the West Virginia Education Association, Classroom Teachers Association,

cont. on next page

and the Retired Teachers Association. She also was an honorary member of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

She is survived by her husband, Kenneth, and one son, George Edward.

The memorial service and interment were conducted by Doyle K. Zwiebel, with burial in the Shinnston Masonic Cemetery. DKZ

Dresser.—Robertie Anna Dresser, 85, of St. Petersburg, Florida, died in Largo, Florida, on November 25, 1989.

She was born on March 30, 1904, in West Edmeston, New York, and was married in 1924 to Ross C. Dresser. They lived in that area until Ross' retirement in 1967 and then moved to Florida. They attended the St. Petersburg Seventh Day Baptist Branch Church.

In addition to her husband, Ross, she is survived by two daughters, June Wendell of Palm Harbor, Florida, and Joan Dye of Belleview, Florida; three brothers, Dean Maxwell of Booneville, New York, Raymond Maxwell of Marcy, New

York, and Stanley Maxwell of Sherburne, New York; four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Services were held on November 29, 1989, at the Mohn Funeral Home of Seminole, Florida, with Pastor Leland Bond officiating. Robertie's final resting place will be in West Edmeston. LWB

Baptist Church of Hopkinton, Ashaway, and was very active in the Ladies Aid Society.

In addition to her husband, Robert, she leaves two sons, Gordon Oates of Ashaway and James Oates of Virginia; one stepdaughter, Kay Morrissey of Glenwood Springs, Colorado; one brother, Harold Arnold of North Stonington,

**Faith makes a Christian.
Life proves a Christian.
Trial confirms a Christian.
Death crowns a Christian.**

Stockbridge.—Hazel (Arnold) Oates Stockbridge, 83, of Farmingdale, Long Island, New York, formerly of Ashaway, Rhode Island, died on December 12, 1989. She was the wife of Robert Stockbridge.

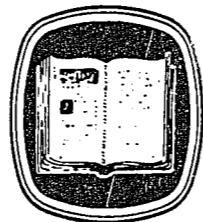
Hazel was the daughter of the late Daniel and Hanna (Brown) Arnold. She was a long-time member of the First Seventh Day

Rhode Island; three sisters, Elsie Leighton of Wakefield, Rhode Island, Dorothy West of Pawcatuck, and Virginia Crandall of Westerly; five grandchildren, four step-grandchildren, and one step-great-grandchild.

Funeral services were held on Long Island on December 15, 1989, followed by interment with graveside services in Oak Grove Cemetery, Ashaway.

New Genealogy

The Stillman Family: Descendants of Mr. George Stillman of Wethersfield, Conn. and Dr. George Stillman of Westerly, R.I.



Author Francis D. Stillman describes the two branches of the Stillman family. The 560-page volume lists 9,900 descendants of Mr. George Stillman.

A copy has been donated to the SDB Historical Society library "in memory of the many Stillmans who were members of the SDB church."

You may order your own book from the author at 15 Waverly Drive, Greensburg, PA 15601. Price is \$55 (includes shipping and handling).

KEVIN'S

CORNER

After stringing this month's "Pearls" and reviewing the flow chart in the center spread, I began to wonder how we have stayed together as a denomination.

One of our Summer Institute courses on SDB distinctives is called "History and Polity." Maybe we should call it, "History OF Polity."

"Pearls" was again taken from our historian's upcoming book. We gave it three pages—almost a necklace—and that was condensed from 18 pages of manuscript! All of that covered only the 20th century changes within the General Conference governing structure.

Lest I sound anti-denominational, remember that my home and heart resides in Janesville. I can't complain (too loudly) about the system, because I'm part of it. We do need to plan, delegate, coordinate, sometimes sedate; how about do the job and celebrate?

From what I have read and heard, our boards and societies have come a long way to cooperate as a team. I see that firsthand every time the executives and Council members gather.

Our Conference offices and boards are set up to help you. But we don't want to become so unwieldy as to become a burden—to you or to each other.

I know we are helping you. We continue to answer requests like, "Can you..."

- check the files on...?"
- give advice on...?"
- present a workshop on...?"
- help support this new ministry?"
- send us 250 copies of...?"

We also continue to improve on the system while we provide help to the local churches. It all takes time, management, and money. We're here to help you, and we need your

help to continue the ministries. A glance at the budget thermometer proves that we need help in helping you.

Another glance at the flow chart made me think that you might be tempted to use it as a dartboard: "All right, who gets my support this month??" Whizz! Thud!!

I pray that your giving is generous and Spirit-led.

The future

The Tract and Communication Council was *again* working on (planning) our purpose statement when one of our astute and frustrated members remarked, "I think we spend too much time organizing, and not enough time *doing!*"

That inspired me:

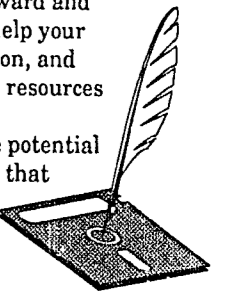
"You've heard it said, 'If you fail to plan, you plan to fail.'

"But I say unto you, 'If you plan and plan and fail to do, all that planning was just doo-doo.'"

It looks like this should be a decade of doing. We have done the praying, planning, and preparing; now, a coordinated pilot program of MORE 2000 is about to begin.

All I can reveal now is that this Mission Of Revival and Evangelism toward and beyond the year 2000 will help your local church develop its vision, and provide the denominational resources to accomplish that vision.

We are excited about the potential of MORE 2000. Please pray that our vision will indeed help yours.



In the next SR:

- Healing—
- Testimonies
- Ministries
- Book resources

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Editor Wins SWEEPSTAKES!!



Well, sort of. During a great Thanksgiving visit to the Central Seventh Day Baptist Church in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, Pastor Ken Chroniger (left), and church treasurer Tommy Payne (right), presented the editor with a check for \$250. This pays for the 10 extra copies of the *Recorder* the church receives.

Will you carry your share to support *The Sabbath Recorder* in 1990?

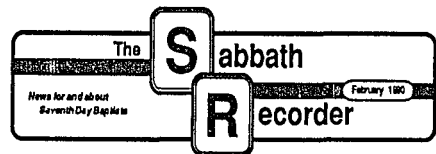
Yes! I would like to help

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