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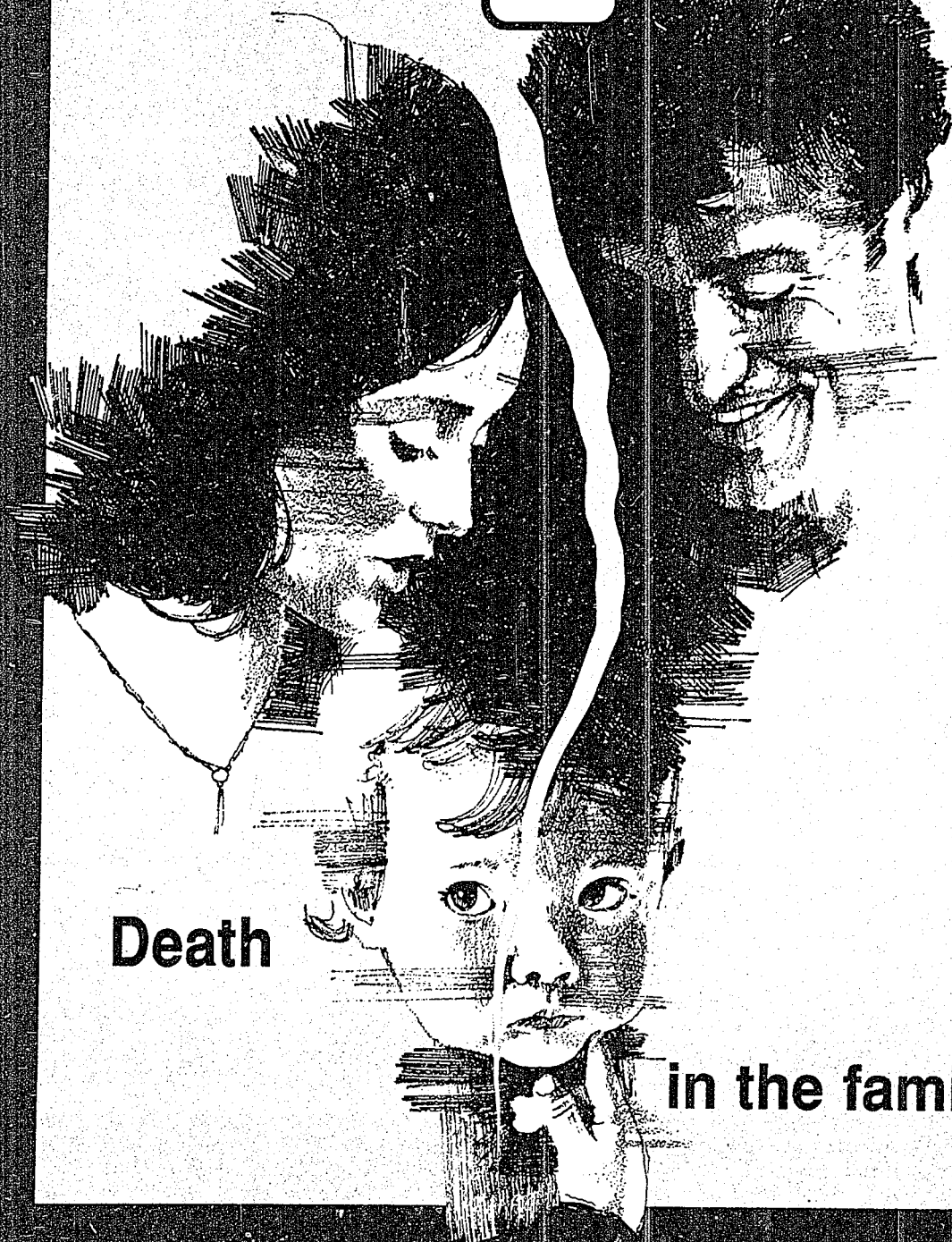
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*News for and about
Seventh Day Baptists*

February 1991

R

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Death

in the family

The Life-giving Light

by Leanne Lippincott

"For we know that when this tent we live in now is taken down — when we die and leave these bodies — we will have wonderful new bodies in heaven..."

2 Corinthians 5:1

I visited the cemetery the day before what would have been my husband's 40th birthday.

"You'd do anything to get out of celebrating the big Four-O," I muttered as I trudged down the gravel road winding towards Denny's grave.

It was a bleak November afternoon, cold and overcast. It reminded me of so many other cold days, days when a strange thought occasionally crept into my mind.

I knew my husband was dead— that his physical body, which was buried in the earth, felt nothing, experienced nothing, sensed nothing.

And yet I felt vaguely uneasy whenever the air turned cold or the ground was covered with ice and snow.

Somehow, I wanted his lifeless body to be warm and comfortable. (Another irrational thought of a slightly crazed widow!)

Then I remembered my pastor's wife talking about a young boy who had been tragically killed in a freak accident at school. "Sometimes it bothers me," she confided, "to think of David entombed in the winter, when the ground is so cold."



As I stood by Denny's grave that chilly November day, God once again put his hand on my shoulder.

The ash-grey clouds, which had been hovering just above the pine trees, were suddenly pierced by rays of shimmering sunlight. Although his body—his earthly "tent"—was resting in the frozen, forlorn ground just beneath my feet, God gently reminded me that the man I loved wasn't there.

Denny is in the light.

In the wonderfully warm, eternally warm, life-giving light.

The Sabbath Recorder



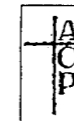
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Who are Seventh Day Baptists?

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

Grieving over a missing piece

by Karen Payne

Shawn, our darling baby...
Baby? No, toddler is a better description. He was nearly 2 when he died. Our blond-haired, blue-eyed sweetheart. He loved being outside on the farm. If I wasn't watching closely he'd slip away and be across the road where his dad

kept me going—and the calm acceptance that everything was in God's control. We had given our children to Him with an open hand and if He was ready to claim Shawn, then it wasn't for me to question. I am glad He has allowed us more time with our other chil-

How do you go on when a piece is missing from your life?

was working on machinery, or follow a cat through the barn and into the pasture.

But when Shawn was 22 months old he didn't wake up one morning. The autopsy said it was SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome). What a shock! We thought we were past the susceptible age. Shawn was too old. But that was what the coroner found. And so, we had to go on without him.

That first night after Shawn died we didn't do much sleeping. We had kept busy doing all the things that had to be done during the day—chores had to be done, hay had to be baled, there were others to talk to—but when it was bedtime there were no more distractions. Brian was 7, Cathy, 5, and Marcy was 4. They knew about death because that's part of "life on the farm," but it is a lot different when it's your brother.

They would start to drift off to sleep and then wake up crying. We learned in the morning that they thought Marcy would die next. She didn't, of course, and we went on with our activities. Daily routine

dren and treasure the little bit of time He shared Shawn with us.

After the memorial service I felt guilty that I hadn't begged for Shawn to be brought back to life as Elijah had for the widow's son. It never occurred to me when I found him lying lifeless in his crib to do anything other than accept it. I realize now that my situation was different from the widow's. I do have other children and a husband to go on with. How thankful I am for them, too. Having our three older children helped ease the loss somewhat. No one can take Shawn's place, but at least we weren't left with an empty house when he died.

The question is how do you go on when a piece is missing from your life? Shawn was old enough so he wasn't taking constant care like an infant would, but as an active toddler he still took a lot of my attention. After he died it took quite a while not to remind the kids to be quiet when they came in. If Shawn wasn't around he must be sleeping, right?

His clothes were packed away

Shawn Michel Payne
September 10, 1982
July 2, 1984

We mourn the loss of our
youngest son,
But his work must have
been done.
Here on earth we must find
ways
To do God's work for all our
days.

We miss him in so many
ways—
The smiling face that
cheered our days
The little laugh, the help-
less call,
Those big blue eyes, we
miss them all.

But Shawn is in a better
place,
Where no more hurt can
leave a trace.
Where tears are gone and
joys abound,
That's where our son can
now be found.

Life goes on, we know it
must.
So in God, we place our
trust.
Knowing strength He will
provide,
Until our tears have all
been dried.

Karen Payne
Fall, 1984

and I shut the door on the room he had shared with Brian. I thought it would bother the kids to have it open as a reminder. It was really for me more than anything. I didn't like going upstairs and seeing that empty room. Later, I found out it bothered the kids more having the door shut and imagining what was behind it.

We had company coming in August, so I got busy and moved the furniture around so the room wouldn't seem so empty. I didn't want to erase all traces of Shawn as if he had never existed, but I didn't want it to look like we were expecting him to come back either. Having the empty space at the table was harder to rearrange. We were using a rectangular table and that empty spot seemed to be a constant reminder that Shawn was gone. I don't know how many times I counted out six plates when it was time to set the table.

A friend remarked that we couldn't know what might have been in store for Shawn if he had lived. With all the drugs, kidnapping and child abuse in our land it is a blessing to know that Shawn is safe in Heaven. He will never have to go through any of the trials or temptations our other children will.

It breaks my heart when I hear of children being abused or just

neglected by their parents. I try not to ask God why we were denied having Shawn grow up in our home when so many children grow up in homes where they are unwanted and mistreated, but it's hard. I do accept it as God's will, and remind myself that Shawn is in a far better place.

As soon as people heard about Shawn's death they came to see us, called, or sent cards. All of these things meant a lot. In fact, we now send a lot more sympathy cards than we used to because we know just how much comfort they do bring. It helps so much to know that others care. In fact I ran across those cards just the other day. I glanced through a few of them and reread the messages that had been written, and still drew comfort from the fact that so many people cared that we were hurting.

It's never too late to send a card or note. Just because more than a week or two has gone by since a death, that family is still trying to cope with the loss. The encouragement from a friend means so much because after a week or two the expressions of sympathy usually stop. We are expected to go on as if

nothing has happened.

One thing that really meant a lot to us was the letter we received from friends at the time of Shawn's birthday, which was just two months after his death. They "dared" to bring up the fact that it was Shawn's birthday. The fact that they remembered was very special. I'm sure many people don't know whether to bring it up or not. They don't want to bring up painful memories.

Others I have talked to who have lost children have had the same feelings as we do. We want to talk about our child. We want him to be remembered. Yes, it is painful to remember, but it's always there. Not talking about him doesn't make it less painful, because our memories keep him alive.

For awhile the kids wanted to set aside the 10th of each month to talk about Shawn. That was his birthdate. As time went by they didn't feel the need for that. We still celebrate his birthday in some way each year. We watch the boys that were born around the same time and think about what he might be like if he had stayed with us. We made a photo album of all

*They knew about death
because that's part of
"life on the farm,"
but it is a lot
different when it's
your brother.*



Cathy, Brian,
and Marcy Payne
surrounding baby
brother, Shawn.

by Don A. Sanford

the pictures Shawn was in. Every once in a while I'll find one of the kids looking through it or showing it to a friend. Shawn's picture is on the buffet along with the school pictures of the other children. Even though he's been gone for six years he's still very much alive in our hearts.

Losing a child and grieving for him is different from anything else. We have experienced other losses in our family, but none of them have affected us the way losing Shawn did. You expect grandparents to die. You don't like to think about it, but you know it will happen, and even parents are expected to die before you. But when your own precious son—whose death you never even considered for a minute—dies, it is devastating.

I find immeasurable comfort in

knowing that God was there in a similar situation. He sent His Son to die. He planned it. Yet, some-

word picture that is, and how I treasure it in my heart. The tears still come and our

We want to talk about our child. We want him to be remembered.

how, I think that when the time came for it to happen, He hurt just as much as we did when we found that still, small form of Shawn's body in his crib. Shawn was no longer there. He had gone to Heaven.

A friend remarked at the memorial service that she could just see Shawn running along beside Jesus, holding His hand. What a precious

throats tighten when we talk about him sometimes, but we know someday we will all sit at Jesus' feet and be together once more. ✠

Karen Payne lives on the Payne farm in Claremont, Minnesota, with husband Doug and their three children. They are members of the Dodge Center SDB Church.

Please DON'T!

Since most of us are notoriously poor at knowing how to reach out to couples who are struggling with the loss of an infant, four couples who have "been there" offer these don'ts for relating to grieving parents:

1) Don't offer glib platitudes or insensitive comments such as, "It was nature's way (or God's way) of taking care of a deformed baby." Dan says, "We loved that baby and we wanted him, no matter what."

Or, "Was it deformed?" One friend asked to see photos of Rick and Stacy's anencephalic baby.

Or, "Well, at least you al-

ready have a child," or, "You can always have another." "It's like saying to a woman who has lost her husband, 'You can always find another,'" says Karen.

2) Don't say, "I'm sorry about your miscarriage," to a couple who has lost a baby more than four months into the pregnancy. (A miscarriage is defined as a pregnancy that spontaneously aborts before the twentieth week. After that time such losses are called stillbirths.) Calling a stillbirth a miscarriage trivializes the loss.

"We didn't almost have a baby; we really did have a baby and it just died too early," says Marilyn, whose baby was still-

born at six months.

3) Don't think you have to provide answers. Couples who have lost babies aren't expecting you to come up with answers; they just want to know you care.

4) Don't remain silent simply because you don't know what to say. All the couples agreed that even saying the wrong thing, if it is done in a sincere, caring way, is better than ignoring the loss altogether.

Copyright by Sharon Sheppard, a member of Calvary Baptist Church, St. Cloud, Minnesota. Her "Please DO" list is on page 8.

Accepting the death of a child

Centuries ago, in ancient Israel, King David lost his infant son when he was only about a week old. From his very birth, the child was sickly and had hovered between life and death. During this period, David fasted and mourned for the life of his son. He spent his nights lying on the earth, praying to God, while those about him tried to persuade him to eat, for he needed strength.

At the end of the week, the child died. But we read that the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead. They said, "Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake with him, and he would not hearken unto our voice. How will he vex himself if we tell him the child is dead?"

When David saw that his servants whispered, he perceived that the child was dead. Therefore David said to his servants, "Is the child dead?"

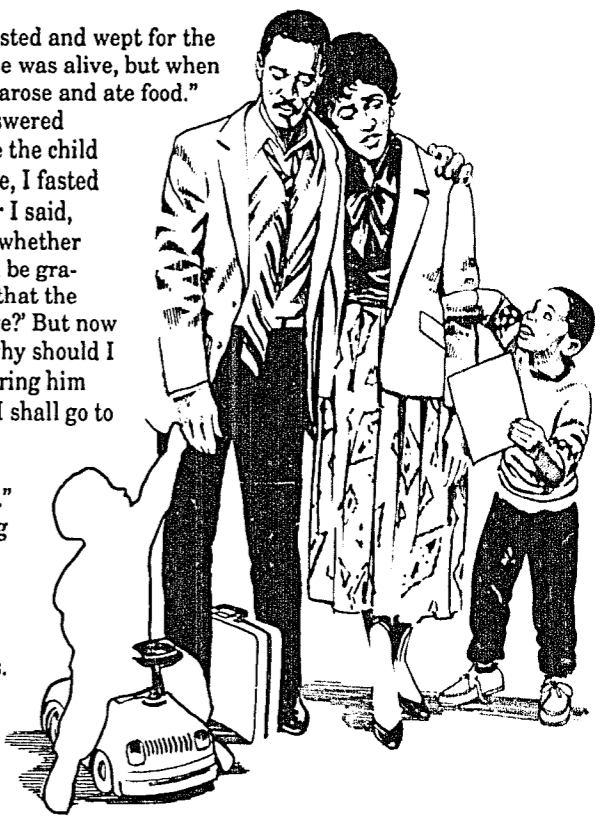
And they said, "He is dead." Then David did the unexpected. Instead of putting on sackcloth and ashes, as was the custom in those days when death entered a family, we read that he arose, washed and anointed himself, changed his

done? You fasted and wept for the child while he was alive, but when he died, you arose and ate food."

David answered them: "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, 'Who knows whether the Lord will be gracious to me, that the child may live?' But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me."

Something of that same experience may be duplicated in our own lives. There is a period of great anxiety

when any child is sick. We turn to God in prayer; we miss our meals and find our sleep interrupted. There is a period of mourning when that which is mortal of one's life be-



was a changed man after this experience of the death of his child. From that moment on, his life was filled with deeper insights, and he knew God in a manner that only suffering can produce.

We do not know the circumstances surrounding the composition of the Shepherd's Psalm, but I like to think that perhaps David, who was himself a shepherd in his earlier days, sang that great Psalm 23 at the time of the death of his infant son, for it expresses the thoughts that we feel as we meet to worship in the presence of the death of this child.

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in

We do not go home as though nothing ever happened.

apparel, and came into the house of the Lord and worshipped. From the house of worship, he went to his own house, asked for food to be put before him, and ate.

The people of his household wondered why he was acting so strangely in the face of death. "What is this thing that you have

comes changed, and death enters our household. But our lives must go on; there is work yet to be done. We are called upon to resume our lives. We enter the house of the Lord and worship. Then we go to our homes and eat.

Yet we do not go home as though nothing had ever happened. David

the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

How appropriate this picture of a shepherd is as we think of death, particularly the death of a child. For one of the greatest characteristics of a shepherd is that of loving care. He cares for his sheep, not just the older sheep of the flock, but the little lambs seem particularly

dear to the shepherd.

The prophet Isaiah, in giving comfort to a captive people, painted the picture of the great Messiah in these words: "He will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs in his arms, and gently lead those that are with young" (Isaiah 40:11). Centuries later, when that prophecy found fulfillment in Jesus Christ, who came as a little babe, he accepted the role of shepherd: "I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me, as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep" (John 10:14-15).

On another occasion, when Jesus was teaching his disciples, they asked him who was the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Calling a little child, he put him in the midst of them, and said: "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven... Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me... See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you that in heaven their angels always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 18:3-5; 10).

Jesus taught us that God does care for children.

We may not know why one such as this little girl should be taken from our midst, but we have faith that no life is lived in vain. It remains for us, the living, to be here dedicated to a fulfillment of the hopes and dreams that might otherwise have been hers, had she

been permitted to grow to maturity in this mortal life.

Let us turn again to the experience of King David at the time that his infant son passed away. Though he did not know the assurance of Christian faith which we can call upon, he did have certain insights that might prove helpful to us as we meet the heartaches of separation and death.

First, he recognized death for what it was. He did not attempt to hide the fact of death as if it were a

be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:53-57).

So our first step in meeting the heartaches of this hour is the acceptance of death as a fact of life, but not as the final chapter of life. Death is defeated by a changed life, by a new dimension. Just as a seed must first die in the ground in order to produce new growth, so must our bodies die in order to find a new life of immortality in God's very presence.

of our faith that all those who dwell in God belong to his eternal kingdom.

Sometimes it is difficult for a minister to speak words of promise for those whose very lives have been nearly complete denials of the elements of Christian faith. But in the innocence of childhood, there is less hesitation. For it is not by the merit of our deeds, but by the grace of God, that such are saved. The words of Jesus have particular significance: "Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." And he took them in his arms and blessed them..." (Mark 10:14-16).

Finally, King David returned to his house, had food prepared, and ate. There is no greater denial of a faith in Christian immortality than to neglect the living for the dead. A sorrow, which saps life from the living on behalf of those who have gone through the portals of death into the very presence of God, shows a lack of faith in the very promises and assurances of God.

Our first step in meeting the heartaches of this hour is the acceptance of death as a fact of life...

mere illusion. David did not say that the child was merely sleeping, for then he might have expected to awaken him again within his own household.

A great deal has been written of late about the attempts to mask death. We even avoid the word, "death," as much as possible. We prefer to speak of "the departed," one who has "been taken from us," or "gone on to his reward." But the fact remains that every person must die, sooner or later. There is little therapeutic value in denying the fact of death.

The Christian hope is found, not in denying death, but in the hope of resurrection. Jesus Christ tasted death; he was crucified, dead, buried, but this was not the final chapter. He rose from the dead!

The Apostle Paul interpreted this to us in terms of a mystery. "For this perishable nature must put on the imperishable, and this mortal nature must put on immortality... then shall come to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?' ... But thanks

Secondly, when David learned of the death of his child, he entered into the house of the Lord and worshipped. This is the function of this funeral service. It is a religious service of worship as we read from the Scriptures, offer our prayers, and give our testimonies of faith.

In the year 125 A.D., a Greek by the name of Aristides wrote to one

...but not as the final chapter to life.

of his friends about the new religion that had sprung up in his country. He was trying to explain the reasons for the extraordinary growth of Christianity. Listen to a sentence from one of his letters: "If any righteous man among the Christians passes from the world, they rejoice and offer thanks to God, and they escort his body with songs and thanksgiving as if he were setting out from one place to another nearby."

What a description he has given of the Christian faith in eternal life! If we believe in God, it is a part

For Debra Lynn, we have the words of Jesus in the Beatitudes, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

For those of us who remain, we read, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." *SR*

Don Sanford is our denominational historian. Don was pastor in White Cloud, Michigan, as he conducted this funeral of a little girl. His meditation first appeared in Pulpit Digest, June 1966.

Please DO!

Here are some gestures grieving parents find particularly helpful:

1) By all means, say something. It needn't be more than a hug and, "I'm so sorry about the loss of your baby." As long as the expression of sympathy genuinely acknowledges the loss, it will be appreciated.

2) Be prepared to listen. Provide a gentle opening for the couple to talk about their loss. A heartfelt, "How are you doing?" gives parents the opportunity to respond if they feel like talking. Marilyn says, "I wanted so much to talk about it. I really needed to talk, but hardly anyone asked."

3) Find out whether the couple would like their loss to be known. The father who said, "Having a stillborn baby isn't something you announce,"

wished someone else had shared the information with the congregation. It's difficult for the church to be supportive if no one else knows about the loss.

4) Take the loss seriously. Acknowledge the baby as a person. Treat the loss as you would the death of any other person of any age.

5) Recognize that grief is an ongoing process that takes time. Remember the couple with a card or a phone call on special days. The baby's due date and the anniversary of the death are particularly difficult hurdles.

6) Offer practical help. Food is one of the most thoughtful and helpful gestures, as are offers to clean, babysit, or run errands. "One person brought over a plate of cookies. She wasn't pushing me to talk, but she was available to listen if I wanted to talk. And I did," says Marilyn.

7) Flowers are tremendously appreciated because they are a cheerful and tangible way to express caring.

8) If you are close to the couple, encourage them to name their baby and to have a memorial service for him or her. It affirms the reality of the baby as a person and provides a lasting recognition of that baby's personhood.

9) Don't forget to pray. Stacy said one of the most meaningful gestures after the loss of their baby was a friend's simple and sincere offer: "How can I pray for you?"

10) Don't be afraid of tears—yours or theirs. Rick said, "My grandfather is a longshoreman—tough, huge muscles, big union man, a dock vocabulary. You'd have to know him to appreciate this, but he cried with me on the phone. That meant a lot to me."

"If you and I were to change places"

A lesson on empathy from Job

by Kenneth E. Smith

Job chapter 15 begins right after Job has made his tremendous complaint to God. Hurt, feeling betrayed, angry, grieving, he has said bitter words. And his three friends have listened about as long as they could stand it.

Eliphaz speaks, "Would a man of sense give bent to such foolish notions and answer with a belly full of wind? Would he banter useless words and arguments so unprofitable? Why, you even banish the fear of God from your mind!..."

Well, I think you have the feeling of the responses that he got from his friends.

Job answered, "I have heard such things often before. You who make trouble, all of you, with every breath, saying, 'Will this windbag never have done? What makes him so stubborn in argument?'"

"If I were to change places, I could talk like you. How I could harangue you and wag my head at you. But no. I would speak words of encouragement and then my condolences would flow in streams."

I want to come back to Job, but I thought a few words from Matthew might be in order. From the seventh chapter: "Pass no judgment, and you will not be judged. For as you judge others, so you will yourselves be judged, and whatever measure you deal out to others will be dealt back to you."

It is a great pity that we can't read more of Job because it is an integral piece of literature. It is very difficult to take it out of context. But I found, in this New English translation, a phrase that I thought was just wonderful. Job says, "If you and I were to change places." Or, "If I were you, I would be more sympathetic with me."

John Wesley, in his journals,

tells some very private moments. He tells the story about going out to call upon some of the farmers in the area to ask them for financial help. Just for a gift so that he can have the funds to share with some who have nothing.

John Wesley had called upon these same farmers, some who gave generously, but one who did not give generously. He admitted in his journal that he had felt this growing anger in his heart when he rode away from that house and had this little pittance of a gift.

One day, he received that little pittance of a gift, looked at it and could be silent no more. He said, "I do not think that you are giving your share."

The man's eyes welled up with tears and he said, "Brother John, I

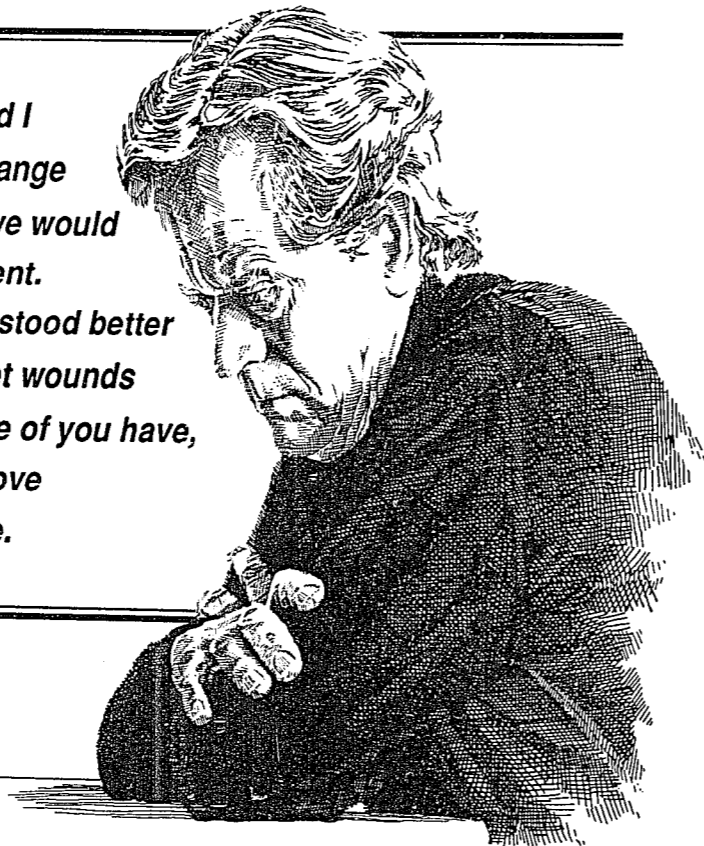
want to tell you about a man who once a week takes a penny and buys a penny's worth of parsnips and boils the parsnips and divides them up in seven and divides up the broth, and has a seventh of the parsnips and a little broth each day with his bread. And that's all."

John Wesley asked, "Who is this poor man?"

And the farmer said, "It's me, John. You see, when I became a Christian through your preaching, I had great debts. I owed my brothers 200 pounds, and I determined, when I found Christ, that I would pay back every penny. I've given you all I can. I'm living on parsnips and water."

John Wesley rode away with considerable insight. He had a new understanding about one fellow

If you and I could change places, we would be different. If I understood better the secret wounds that some of you have, I would love you more.



man. What he suggested in the journal was that he must be meeting people who eat parsnips all the time.

If you and I could change places, we would be different. If I understood better the secret wounds that some of you have, I would love you more. If only we could tell each other the mistakes we've made and put aside our pride. (We're not going to do it.) But if we could, we would, as the Indians say, walk in another man's moccasins and understand.

If you and I were to change places, we would be more sympathetic. That's for sure. But there is another word. It is a better word, a bigger word; a word we don't use all the time. We use the word, *sympathy*, because we send cards to each other that say "sympathy."

The rich word is *empathy*. The dictionary says that empathy is understanding another person for greater appreciation of his feelings. Being there for each other is a terribly important part of being a Christian.

The truth is that this empathy is something we're not very good at. One reason we're not very good at it is because we are more comfortable if we don't get messed up with other people's problems. And I think there is something basic in human nature that insulates us from each other's cares and heartbreaks.

The book of Job is one of the most profound books about the human condition in all of literature. In any culture, any where. For Job is all of us.

Job is the human condition. He is not some freak. He is not some oddity. He is not some very special unique person, although the story itself has a unique kind of setting. Job is "Everyman."

Job's message says to us that you and I stand the risk of losing what is dearest to us. It is a part of

the life that we have been given that things are also taken away. We lose our loved ones and we grieve. We lose our possessions. We can lose our health. You can have everything else and be completely devastated when you lose your health.

Now I want to say something about Job that I think is essential to this story. And that is, having

Sometimes the worst help we can ever have in our greatest need is from those who have traditional religious answers.

lost his whole family, and grieving over it, having been a rich man and become suddenly poor and feeling what that loss means, and being terribly ill with loathsome boils—He still believes in God! He still has faith. And he is overcoming! He is overcoming the anger, the grief, and the bitterness until his religious friends come to see him. And then he almost loses hope.

There is a terribly important lesson here if we have a ministry of the Gospel. Sometimes the worst help we can ever have in our greatest need is from those who have traditional religious answers that they want us to hear more than they want to tell us they love us.

With Job, they stole his dignity and robbed him of hope. And they even tried to persuade him that God Himself didn't care. They themselves had been taught these answers and they wanted to share them. They wanted to be theologically correct. Eliphaz said what

people have said at many a funeral throughout history: "You must have done something wrong."

People who lose a loved one feel a tremendous sense of guilt. If they don't, something is wrong. That sense of guilt has to do with all of the things you would like to have done, but didn't. All of the things you would like to have said, but didn't. All of the expressions of caring and love that you would like to have shared, but you somehow just didn't quite do it.

We all feel guilty when we lose a loved one. But then to have a picnic friend come and say, "The reason you're in this mess is because of what you've done... Somehow you've done something wrong and God is getting even with you."

If that were true, this is not the moment to say it because it's a crushing addition to the burden you already have.

Then, there is Bildad. Eliphaz made himself very clear. He was very articulate. Bildad was not so articulate, and says, "Well, Eliphaz is correct, you know. He's right. Now, Job, maybe it wasn't you. Maybe you didn't do this awful thing that has brought about this retribution. It could have been your father who did it. And God is getting even now. Or even one of your sons. Some member of your family could have done this bad thing, and we don't understand the mysteries of God's justice, but God's getting even."

And then there was Zophar who, a little embarrassed about some of his friends' doctrinaire theology, said, "Job, it's all a great mystery. You ought really to plead ignorance. There must be something in your attitude that is wrong, if you didn't do anything wrong."

Job says, "You know, if you and I were to change places, I could do just what you're doing. But, I wouldn't do it. I would hope, if we were to change places, that I would

be more sympathetic. And I would hope that I would be more sympathetic when someone needs me."

Here, I want to say two good things about Job's friends. Two good things. First of all, *they came*. I don't know that it records that anyone else came, but they came. The first and best thing that we can do when a friend is in grief or sorrow or hurting, is just come. We say, "I just don't know what to say." That totally misses the point. If you come, you are saying something. You're saying, "I care." They came. Let's give them credit, they came.

And secondly, very important, they *listened*. Before they opened their mouths to speak, they listened. They sat there with him. The Bible says they sat there for days. That was a wonderful thing to do. They were helping Job by being there. Job was able to express his anger because he thought that he was among friends. He may have said some very foolish things, but he was getting it out. He was getting his anger and his feelings out. They listened. They were good friends.

I remember a Seventh Day Baptist pastor telling me about his first pastorate and the first time he got called out on a tragic family situation.

He got there, and didn't know what to say. All he did was hug them and cry. And he felt so inadequate. He thought to himself, "I'll never be a pastor. I don't know what to say." But they thought he was wonderful. It was years later that they told him how much it meant to them that he obviously cared.

When we can change places with those who grieve, we do not need intellectual answers as to why this happened or why God does what He does. Thank God we don't need

those answers, because most of us don't have them.

I think sometimes it is a mistake to rush in where people hurt and grieve and say, "Well, this is God's will." It's God's will? You don't even know that! Could it not be that, because of sin and the power of sin and what we do to each other,

off from other people. You can be in the sick room, and there are times when you don't want to see people because of the way you feel and the way you look, and people separate themselves. And yet, that person alone and hurting and very sick can be in a kind of shock. What they need most of all is the assurance

**When we can change places
with those who grieve,
we do not need intellectual answers
as to why this happened
or why God does what He does.**

things happen in this world that God would never have happened were it not for the freedom that He has entrusted to us? People have freedom to do good things and bad things.

Surely it is not God's will that children are abused or that lovely people die of cancer. There's something wrong with that kind of simple answer, and it doesn't comfort people. And to say to the parents of a dying baby, "God may need him in heaven," may sound very clever, but it hurts. It hurts because parents don't believe that God needs the child any more than they do. There are times when the truth isn't comforting at all. People who love and care are careful.

Job was really crying. He was crying with words, and they should have kept listening. Jesus, you remember, really wept when a friend died.

If only we could change places with people who are in pain and suffering and ill! It is so important to realize that illness cuts people

that there are people who care—especially those of the fellowship of caring, which is the church.

If we could but change places and really understand the meaning of those wise old words, "There, but for the grace of God, go I," we would discover some of the meaning of being a Christian.

The Bible says that God became flesh and dwelt among us. Do we understand what that means? It means that these words, "If I could change places with you," is precisely what God did. The meaning of the Gospel is that the God who created and loves us and sustains, in fact *changed places*.

Christ's mission in the world was a mission to all—those who are destitute, poor, sick, grieving. If you and I could change places with our brother, we would be more like Christ. *SR*

Dr. Ken Smith, a former SDB pastor and Milton College president, is executive director of the St. Luke's Hospital Foundation in Kansas City, Missouri.



Women's Society page by Charlotte Chroninger

Fill a family void today

"Is there a heart o'erbound by sorrow? Is there a life weighed down by care? Come to the cross—each burden bearing, all your anxiety—leave it there.

"All your anxiety, all your care, bring to the mercy seat—leave it there. Never a burden He cannot bear, never a friend like Jesus." (Verse one of "All Your Anxiety" by Edward Henry Joy, The Salvation Army, London.)

While at Salem, West Virginia, for Conference in 1988, I received a phone call that my grandmother had died.

Grandma was 93 years old. She had recovered from strokes and heart attacks but finally had to go to a nursing home when my grandfather could no longer care for her. We were notified earlier that she had been taken to the hospital and wasn't expected to make it.

Even though I knew that her time on earth was drawing to a close, I was still shocked to hear she had died. As we made the trip back to Iowa for the funeral, I really didn't have lots of time to dwell on the events surrounding her passing, but the reality of her death hit me as we went to the funeral home for the visitation. My grandma's life on earth with her family was over; she was now with the heavenly family of God.

I thought about all the things we had done together, all the Christ-mases spent at her house, all the games of Old Maid she had played with my brother and me (never

objecting when she seemed to continually lose), all the hidden treats she had for us when we visited (which was at least once or twice a week), all the places she and my grandfather had taken us, and how my brother could make her laugh so hard that her tummy would jiggle. What wonderful memories of her I have!

Grandma led a full life and loved the Lord. I'm so glad that I was able to enjoy her company, but I'm sad that my children will never remember her (two were too young and two she never saw). Grandmas and grandpas are so important in a child's life.

But many children miss out on the rich blessings of being with their grandparents because of distance, death, divorce, or other factors. I am so thankful that our children have had "adoptive" grandparents in the churches we served. There were, and are, people in the church who have taken our children under their wings, who love them as their own grandchildren. Because our children aren't able to spend time weekly or even monthly with their grandparents because of distance, they are able to enjoy "grand-parents" through some very special people of God in our church family.

A death in the family causes a hole, a void that was once filled by someone special. During these

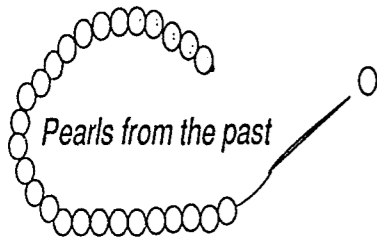
**Don't wait
until there's a
death in the family before
you appreciate the people in your life.**

times we, as God's people, have a wonderful opportunity to minister to those who are grieving and hurting. We can give our time, our resources, our love and concern, and show that there is a friend who can lift the load of despair—a friend named Jesus.

Look at the people in your community, in your church family, in your blood family. Is there a void in someone's life that you can help fill? Is there someone you can visit weekly? Are there some children who could use another set of "grandparents" from time to time? We all need each other to get through this earthly life. We all need the Lord, too, but having people to share with us and to love us can make our days and weeks full and enjoyable.

Don't wait until there's a death in the family before you appreciate the people in your life. Make the most of your time with them now. Begin making some beautiful and significant memories for them—and for you. *SR*





And the anvil remains

by Don A. Sanford, historian

How far in the past does an experience have to be to qualify as a "Pearl"? As I considered this month's *Recorder* theme, my mind came back to a personal experience of January 1976 when I was privileged to stand in the pulpit of the SDB church at Little Genesee, New York, and lead a final testimony to the faith of my father, Mark R. Sanford. A portion follows:

As I pondered in my study what message might be given to reflect something of the faith which Dad possessed and exhibited in his life, my mind came back again and again to the words expressed by an unknown author:

*Last eve I passed beside the
blacksmith's door
And heard the anvil ring the vesper
chime;
Then looking in, I saw upon the
floor
Old hammers, worn with beating
years of time*

*"How many anvils have you had,"
said I,
"To wear and batter all these
hammers so?"
"Just one," said he, and then, with
twinkling eye,
"The anvil wears the hammers out,
you know."*

*And so, thought I, the anvil of
God's Word
For ages skeptic blows have beat
upon
Yet though the noise of falling
blows was heard
The anvil is unharmed—the
hammers gone.*

As a boy I spent many evenings in Dad's shop, watching him take a piece of iron, slip it into the forge to be heated to the right temperature, then draw it out and lay it upon the anvil where, with skilled hands, a sensitive eye and a strong right arm, he shaped that iron to the form desired. Sometimes he would lay it aside, take another piece and form it true till it was ready to join all together into a thing of beauty and usefulness.

Focus your attention for a moment on the two candelabra which grace this church. They were made by Dad as a living memorial to Mother and the life they shared. Before the iron was wrought, they were just cold rods with little shape or form. Yet each bend was carefully heated and shaped by a master craftsman. When the desired shape was reached, he then plunged it into water to temper it, making it hard and strong, ready for its intended use.

Several things were necessary in the process of fashioning these works: the raw material, the fire created by good anthracite coal with a blower adding oxygen to make it burn with greater intensity, the tongs and hammer, and finally the anvil—that solid piece against which the blows fell. The anvil had a special extension called a horn around which curved surfaces could be formed.

On occasion Dad would let me try my

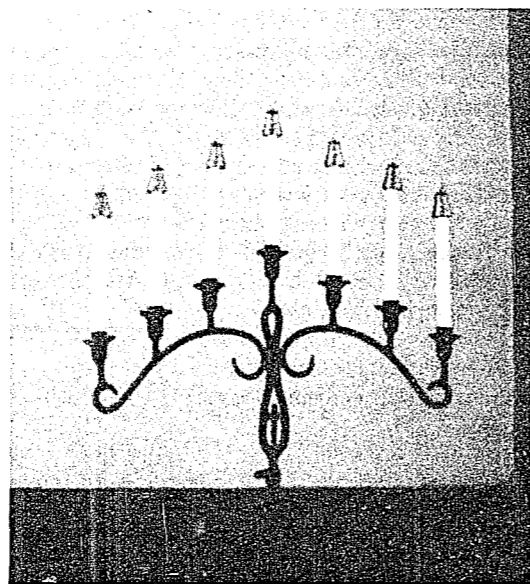
hand at the job. Although I had the same ingredients, I never got the same results, for something was lacking—the eye and the expertise. It was what Dad was able to do with the materials at hand which was distinctive.

Yet it was not just for what he could do with iron that I remember his life; he was also a shaper of lives. There is no way of telling how many lives have been influenced by his. I know that my own life has been influenced beyond measure. Less than a month ago I gave to Dad a bound copy of my Master Degree thesis, which I was able to dedicate to him with the notation on the front flyleaf:

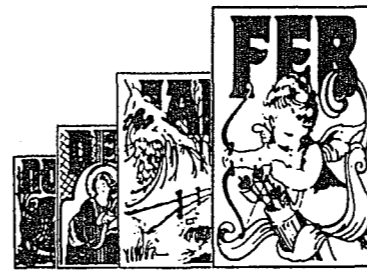
To Dad, although this represents hours of study on my part, it represents years of living on the very frontiers of faith on your part. I remain eternally grateful for the heritage which you and Mother gave to me.

Dad was able to help shape other lives outside the family. He served

continued on page 26



Little Genesee church's candelabrum made by Mark Sanford.



SR Almanac

Where we
have been...

One year ago—February 1990

A closer look at our polity—how SDBs govern themselves—with articles by Ernest Bee, John Peil, and Paul Osborn.

Don Sanford outlines our 20th century denominational structure on the "Pearls" pages.

Center spread contains denomination's organizational chart.

Medical clinic in Chipho, Malawi, expanded to meet refugees' needs.

Report of Pastor Gene Smith's T.I.M.E. graduation.

Five years ago—February 1986

Pastor Gary Hemminger writes on "Christian Sabbathism: a legalistic remnant?"

Washington, D.C., church celebrates 40th year.

Stirring baptisms reported from Poland.

"Getting Acquainted" feature has Janet Thorngate reviewing World Federation Conferences from Brazil and Guyana.

Missions "Focus" relays news from the latest Australasian Conference and on new churches in India.

10 years ago—February 1981

Editor John Bevis and Art Director Pat Cruzan compile a very special outreach issue concerning the Sabbath. This piece is still available and contains Sabbath statements and dozens of pictures of SDBs and our facilities.

25 years ago—February 1966

Director of Evangelism Leon Lawton and Conference President Marion Van Horn perform goodwill mission to Mexico.

Pastor Duane Davis reports on dedicated service work in Jamaica.

The "Educator," a quarterly bulletin outlining the work of the SDB Board of Christian Education, sent to churches.

Undated outreach issue covers the theme: "Compassion or Complacency."

Dr. and Mrs. Victor Burdick review year in Malawi. List of seminary students includes Leroy Bass, John Conrod, Herbert Saunders, Edward Sutton, and Glen Warner.

50 years ago—February 1941

Pastors Everett Harris, Alfred, New York, and Orville Babcock, Adams Center, New York, prepare the Daily Bible Meditations.

Lively letters continue to come to Mizpah Greene for the Children's Page.

Editor Herbert Van Horn asks for names and addresses of young SDBs entering the armed services.

Pastors Charles Smellie, Jamaica, and Neal Mills, DeRuyter, New York, highlighted in "Who's Who." Ralph Coon accepts call to pastorate in Ashaway, Rhode Island.

Wayne Rood pays tribute to the faith of George Washington.

75 years ago—February 1916

The "Sabbath Reform" section lifts up the "Perpetuity of the Law of God."

Y.W.C.A. celebrates 50 years.

Denomination's "Forward Movement" promoted.

Life sketch and accolades of Rev. Leander Livermore presented after his death.

An historical sketch of Milton Academy covers the years 1854-1867.

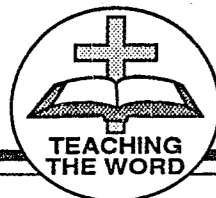
Answering the question, "What reforms would you most like to see?" several leading ministers placed "a genuine religious awakening" at the head of the list.

Our seminary's Dean A.E. Main gives a "vocational chat" on reasons for entering the Christian ministry.

...where are we headed?

Pray...

- that our governing structure reflects God's will and Christ's love
- for our people in the armed forces
- for our missionaries in Malawi
- for our World Federation churches preparing for meetings in New Zealand
- that more young people receive and accept the call to vocational ministry
- for our country's government and military leaders
- for a genuine awakening in all of us



The third sacrament

Pastor Jus Start walked into the church library after the Sabbath morning worship service expecting to be congratulated by the members of his Sabbath School class. He had worked hard and delivered what he thought was an exemplary sermon. It had been quite awhile since he had preached "a Sabbath Sermon."

He overheard a visitor to the class, Mrs. N. Decision, tell Superintendent Ed Christian, her next-door neighbor, that she didn't understand how the pastor could refer to the Sabbath as the third sacrament. "I thought a sacrament was like baptism or communion—where the individual does something," she was heard to say. The class became quiet, listening.

Superintendent Christian replied that our Seventh Day Baptist Statement of Beliefs groups the sacraments together: Baptism, The Lord's Supper, and The Sabbath. He further explained, glancing at his notes of Pastor Start's sermon, "We have a trinity of sacraments which represent our understanding of God's essence, personality, and activity. The sacraments were instituted and commanded by God and His Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The sacraments are our covenant pledges which we make with God. When we seek to know God through Christ we accept His commands to be baptized, to participate in the Lord's Supper, and to observe the Sabbath as sacred time devoted to knowing Him."

Mrs. N. Decision loudly announced, "The pastor of the church

across the street from my house says his sabbath is Monday. He claims that keeping one day in seven is important, not which day you keep. He feels that he works so hard on Sunday that it isn't a sabbath for him. Now I'm confused. I don't know which day is the Sabbath."

Faith Willing, Deacon Willing's wife, interrupted, "I want to go back to what the pastor said about a sacrament being 'an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.' I don't understand how the Sabbath qualifies as a sacrament."

Pastor Start, who had heard the lively discussion and quietly written the following chart on the classroom markerboard, asked if he might present further comments on the Sabbath as a sacrament.

A Trinity of Sacraments	
	Sacrament
1.	BAPTISM
2.	LORD'S SUPPER
3.	SABBATH
	Symbol of The Trinity
1.	THE HOLY SPIRIT
2.	THE SON
3.	THE FATHER
	Frequency of Rite Observance
1.	Once
2.	Annually/quarterly
3.	Weekly
	Scriptural Command
1.	Matthew 3:16; 28:19
2.	Luke 22:17-20, 1 Cor. 11:23-25
3.	John 1:1-3; 14:15, Ex. 20:8-11

Pastor Start explained to the Sabbath School class that our word, "sacrament," is not found in the Bible. The term came into use in the fourth century in place of the Greek word, *mysterion*, which is found only in the gospels in Mark 4:11. Here Jesus told the disciples they were given the *mysterion*, the explanation of the Kingdom, rather than only in parables. *Mysterion* is translated "mystery" by the King James Version and also in the New King James. Other modern translations prefer "secret" (NIV, RSV, TEV, NEB). The Apostle Paul spoke of this *mysterion* in 1 Corinthians 2:7 as also a special wisdom known by the Christian. It is a "mystery" or "secret" because it is understood only by the Believer. Sacraments are special signs or symbols to the church, the Christian covenant community.

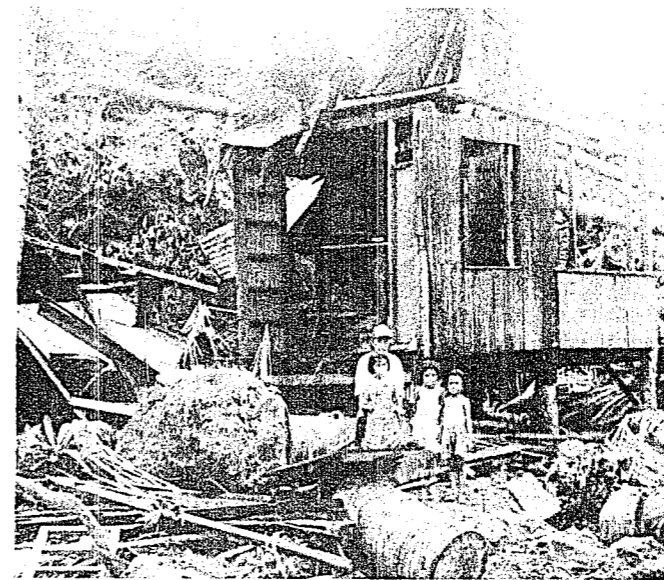
Sacraments are unifying rituals of the Christian covenant community. They are the "pluses" of the group's molecular or group life structure. Sacraments are the "positrons" in our church's organization. They are the positive elements in our church life; the cohesiveness which acts to counter our "electron," elective or individualistic tendency to choose another option, to spin away from relationship with our group, and to move toward another ideology.

The Sabbath, and all sacraments, focus upon the nature of God's essential goodness and care for mankind. Keeping the Sabbath on the day God commanded and Christ kept, the seventh day, is to keep this outward and visible sign as evidence of our loyalty to God and our acceptance of His promise of an inward and spiritual grace and an eternal Sabbath rest. *SK*



Cebu, the Philippines, Asia

The visit by Rodney Henry and Gabriel Bejjani to our sister churches late in November gave them opportunity to view the terrible destruction of the



Viewing a storm's destruction in the Philippines.

tropical storm earlier that month. SDB United Relief Funds were taken to help individual families and churches. Though better than nothing, the money could not begin to replace all that was lost. Our representatives' journey did, however, bring individuals together and offered a means by which future work can be better coordinated.

Chipho Clinic, Malawi, Africa

Refugees from Mozambique have now passed 10,200 (end of November) and continue to increase. Housing for medical and relief workers has been built, the clinic properly equipped, the water wells in use, and the cholera camp is operational. A plague of flies came in November, too.

But while the clinic facilities are taxed far above their planned use, it does offer needed medical services, and Seventh Day Baptists are being praised for the clinic and staff at such a time as this. The SDB United Relief funds sent in November are also helping to meet needs.

Atlanta, Georgia, USA

A second meeting is being held in the north central area of Atlanta, Georgia. This offers more outreach and coverage of the growing urban area as the Atlanta SDB Church is on the western edge of the city. Director of Extension Russell Johnson visited the leaders of this new group in December.

Helsinki, Finland

The European Free Street Mission-Seventh Day Baptist (EFSM-SDB), under the leadership of Pastor Risto Sorsa, planned to take a truckload of relief goods, Bibles, and literature to Romania early in 1991. They hope to contact independent Sabbath-keeping churches through which such items can be channeled.

In 1991 it was hoped the Mission's application to the government would allow donors to credit their gifts as tax-deductible. This would bring much more support for this ministry.

Miami, Florida, USA

The Miami SDB Church has called a council to meet and consider the ordination of Extension Pastor Andrew Samuels. They set a tentative date for ordination on February 16, 1991.

Rakvere, Estonia, SSR

Though this congregation and the history of SDBs in Estonia goes back over 60 years, a new rebirth has come in the last four years.

Pastor Heiki and Mrs. Amino Poldaru offer vital leadership. He edits a widely distributed church publication, and they publish Scripture story coloring books for children. The sixth book of 30,000 copies is used in many churches, homes, and even the schools where the Bible is taught regularly.

It is hoped that through correspondence and visits with SDBs in Russia, their witness can be increased. Camcorder pictures taken by Leon Lawton on his December visit will enable sharing both sights and sounds from our brethren in Estonia and Finland. A video will be available through the AV Library in Janesville, Wisconsin.



the BEACON

Produced by the Youth Committee of the Board of Christian Education
For and by members of the SDB Youth Fellowship February 1991

So send I you

by Dale Thorngate

All over the country, churches have been enjoying their Youth Week services. The topic for Youth Week, "So Send I You," fits in very well with the thoughts of young people, especially at the high school age.

This is the time for deciding what to do with our lives. All over the nation young people are asking themselves: Should I go to college? Should I be a mechanic or factory worker? Should I be a secretary or a housewife? Also, another very crucial question that young men

When Christ gave His disciples the great commission He meant it for us, too.

are asking themselves is: Should I just join the army and get it over with?

Just the other day I heard a letter read on the radio from a young fellow in high school. He wanted to quit school and get a job so that he could have some fun before "Uncle Sam" got him. Yes,

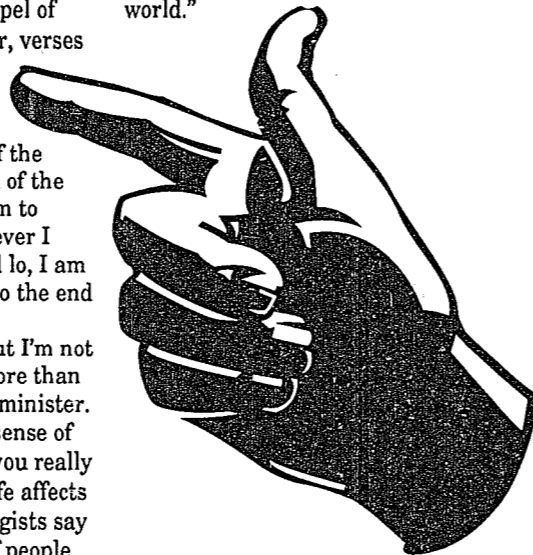
we young people are at a time of many decisions. And now with our world in such an uproar it makes these decisions of what to do with our lives all the harder to make.

In thinking about these decisions, let's turn to the Gospel of Matthew, the 28th chapter, verses 19 and 20. Jesus said: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world, Amen."

Now I hear you say, "But I'm not going to be a minister." More than likely you won't become a minister. At least not in the literal sense of the word. However, have you really thought about how your life affects the lives of others? Sociologists say that a society is a group of people interacting with one another. The word *interacting* means people living together, being dependent on each other. Whether we realize it or not, our lives greatly affect the lives of others about us. And as Christians we should be more conscious of this fact. Our conduct will greatly affect people's opinion of us and of our Christian faith.

When Christ gave His disciples the great commission He meant it for us, too, even though we are not ministers with churches to serve.

We are ministers to those who are in need of spiritual help. Christ says in the end of the 20th verse that if we will live our lives as He would have us, He will be with us "always, even unto the end of the world."



God said, "So send I YOU." Will you accept Christ's call and live your lives as He would have you? The call is great for good Christian laymen as well as ministers. Say to Christ: "Lord, here am I, send me!"

(Reprinted from The Beacon, February 1954. Pastor Dale Thorngate was feature editor of The Beacon and a student at Milton College when he wrote this article.)

Pastor Profile

Name: Gordon Paul Lawton

Birthdate and place:

April 27, 1951, Glendale, California

Current pastorate:

Boulder, Colorado, since 1982

Family:

Wife--Linda J. (Burdick)
Sons--Nathanael, 10; Philip, 4
Daughter--Miriam, 8



Education:

Elementary School in Jamaica
Lakeview High School, Battle Creek, MI
and Brookfield (NY) Central
SUNY at Oswego, and Univ. of Denver,
1973--B.S. in Business Administration
Central Baptist Theological Seminary,
1977--M.Div. Pastoral Theology major

Former pastorates/employment:

Warehousing/order filling at Montgomery
Ward catalogue store
Special service worker at SDB Building,
Plainfield, New Jersey
Youth leader at Nortonville, Kansas
School bus driver
Pastor, First SDB Church of Hopkinton,
Ashaway, RI, 1977-1982

My first job was:

Delivering newspapers in Lakeview. I
arranged for someone else to deliver
on Sabbath to keep the day special.

Personal hero:

Jesus

Favorite childhood memory:

At age 4 I got up early one morning,
dressed myself and went outside in the
driveway where it was cool and quiet.
I still like that time of morning.

Favorite Bible passage:

1 John 5:3-4 (LB): "Loving God means doing what he tells us to do, and really, that isn't hard at all; for every child of God can obey him, defeating sin and evil pleasure by trusting Christ to help him."

Favorite author:

Lyle E. Schaller (pastoral theology)

If given an all-expense paid vacation:

I would go to the British Isles or Israel.

A great answer to prayer was:

Linda. Still is. God's timing was different than mine. In waiting, His answer was better than I dreamed.

A church project I'm excited about:

A new church building. The land is purchased; building planning in process.

My vision for SDBs:

To see many more SDB churches, but that each group be a loving, open community, obedient to the Word of God in all areas: making disciples, baptizing, teaching, to be equipped for those God sends to us.

First visit to Finland and Estonia

by Leon Lawton

This special first visit to the new mission field in Eastern Europe—Finland and Estonia, SSR—was made possible by using frequent flyer mileage from USAir with international travel on British Airways. Only \$57 was necessary to facilitate the ticketing, pictures for visa, and customs fees recently increased by the U.S. government.

The invitation came from Missionary Thomas McElwain who began service in February 1987 and completed his ministry on December 31, 1990. It was also made by Rev. Risto Sorsa, pastor of the Helsinki, Finland, SDB Church and of the European Free Street Mission—Seventh Day Baptist (EFSM-SDB).

The first weekend, November 29-December 2, was spent in Helsinki in the Sorsa home. A Sabbath eve meal and fellowship was joined by two sisters from Estonia and a Jewish man, in addition to Missionary McElwain and the Sorsa family. Sabbath morning we went to the local congregation meeting site—an assembly room in a commercial building downtown. There were 12 at the service, and Tom interpreted both his sermon and mine. Pastor Risto does not speak English but does well in Estonian, Swedish, and some Russian in addition to his native language. The service lasted for about three hours.

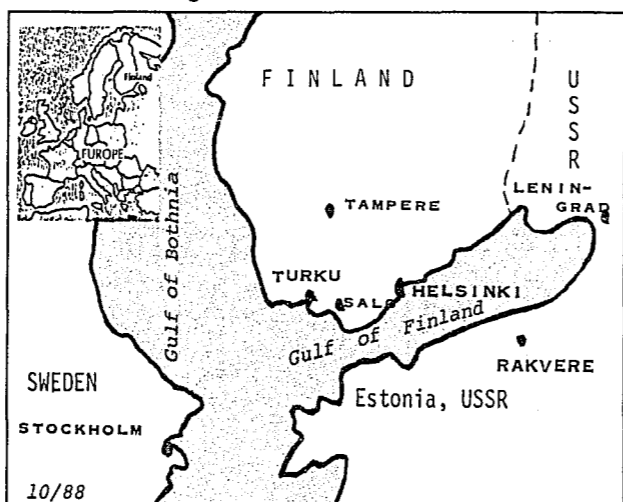
The evening was spent at the Sorsa home with the sisters from Estonia and Pastors Sorsa and McElwain discussing their ministries and hopes for the enlargement of the witness. The conversation continued on Sunday morning before Tom and I left for a two and

one-half hour bus trip to his home in Turku, Finland.

Regular meetings were held on Sabbath at the McElwains' in downtown Turku. In Tom's absence, his wife, Ritva, and daughter, Anna Maria, lead out in the service. Twice a month a woman travels by ferry overnight from Stockholm, Sweden (a 12-hour trip each way), to worship with them. Other Sabbaths she has meetings in her home with Bible reading, singing, and discussion.

On Wednesday two men visited us. One committed himself to becoming a covenant member of the Turku SDB Church group. The other was an international student from Sudan. Tom hopes their desire for leadership roles can be fulfilled.

Thursday, December 6, was Independence Day in Finland with businesses closed. The weather during all this time was moderate for this time of year and some walks around Turku were interesting—market square, the Cathedral (Lutheran State Church), the river, and one museum. Later that afternoon we traveled by bus back to Helsinki to prepare to leave Friday for Estonia. Our visas were



Top photo: Rev. Leon Lawton. Above: Map of Finland and Estonia.

granted on Tuesday, Pastor Sorsa reported.

The Street Mission was organized some years before Pastor Sorsa came to the Sabbath through Bible study. He and his wife decided to begin keeping the Sabbath, and the Friday before that first Sabbath they noted the announcement Missionary McElwain placed in the newspaper giving information about Seventh Day Baptists. They immediately made contact and became SDBs. Then the legal step was taken to add "Seventh Day Baptist" to the name of the mission.

This mission collects funds, food, and clothing to aid the needy in Russia and Eastern European countries. Several truckloads have been taken to Poland and Estonia and some to Romania. In addition, thousands of Bibles have been obtained and distributed in these areas.

On Friday, Pastors McElwain, Sorsa, and I took the ferry from Helsinki to Tallinn, Estonia, just over a three-hour trip across the Gulf of Finland (part of the Baltic Sea). The two women from Rakvere and the daughter of one also traveled with us. We were met at the dock by Pastor Heiki Poldaru and his father from Rakvere. The EFSM-SDB provided a used Russian car, purchased in Finland, for Pastor Poldaru. He had it converted to run on propane gas, which is only 25% the cost of regular gasoline. The car has become a valuable asset in his ministry and was helpful in our transportation while in Estonia.

One of the sisters, Poline Putilo, was our hostess and provided housing and some meals while we were in Rakvere, though we had many meals in other homes. Most of the food was grown in their own gardens and canned. It seemed ample, but shops were limited in their supplies.

Sabbath was a busy day with services in their Meeting House—a remodeled residence owned by Pastor Poldaru's father. Deacon Leo was speaking as we arrived a few minutes after 11 a.m. I was asked to speak, and a high school boy who had studied English for five years was my interpreter. They have an English teacher as a member, but she lives some distance away and could not be with us.

After lunch we went to a retire-

ment residence where two men of the congregation have service each Sabbath afternoon. I was again

Regular meetings were held on Sabbath at the McElwains' in downtown Turku.

asked to speak, and Pastor Poldaru interpreted. Then we drove over 60 kilometers to another city for dinner with a new family, won by Pastor Sorsa in special evangelistic meetings held some months ago.

Sunday morning we visited a former SDB pastor's widow, 84,



Ritva, Tom, and Anna Maria McElwain singing psalms.

who shared her faith and insight on SDBs in Estonia over the last 60 years. After lunch I was taken to the Meeting House again to participate in their weekly children's Bible class led by Amino Poldaru, the pastor's wife. She teaches kindergarten in the public schools

and has, with her husband, published six Bible story coloring books for children. I understand that 30,000 of the recent one was printed, and they are sold to all churches through bookshops and used even in public school Bible classes. This is a unique and vital ministry. On Monday, Pastor McElwain visited her school and spoke to the students. There is complete freedom to share the Scriptures and speak of one's faith in the public schools there, we understand.

During this time Pastors Sorsa, Poldaru, and I visited another home where two older men requested prayer. One had made several missionary journeys to Siberia and Russia but because of heart trouble is now restricted. He

asked for healing from God so he could continue his ministry. He reported visiting a Seventh Day Baptist church when in Moscow but was not able to give names and addresses.

That afternoon we were driven back to Tallinn and returned by ferry to Helsinki.

Tuesday, Tom

returned to Turku, and I rested. On Wednesday morning I was at the airport before 6:30 a.m. to catch my flight, returning home at 7:00 that night.

We praise the Lord for safe travel and for His hand at work in these countries. S

South Atlantic churches gather

On November 16 and 17, the Daytona Beach, Florida, church hosted the first general gathering of Seventh Day Baptist groups in this end of the Southeastern Association. For many years groups in other areas have met regularly for fellowship and inspiration. Some of these meetings are actually older than General Conference itself. Now we have brought this custom to our region.

The seven churches represented were Palatka, Bradenton, Okeechobee, Daytona Beach, and Miami—all in Florida; Atlanta, Georgia; and Charleston, South Carolina.

The theme for the weekend was "More Like the Master," based on 2 Peter 1:4—"He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature."

The message in each service related this theme to specific issues. Pastor John Camenga spoke Sabbath Eve on the topic, "Vision: More Like the Master," from 1 John 3:2. Pastor Andrew Samuels of

Miami brought the sermon on Sabbath morning. He spoke on "Partakers of the Divine Nature" from the theme verse. Pastor Leland Bond spoke Sabbath afternoon on "More Like the Master Where We Live," from Ephesians 4:1. Pastor Luis Lovelace of Atlanta

Laura Price, Palatka; Luis Lovelace, Atlanta; Ray Winborne, Charleston; Mary Green and Grace Camenga, Daytona Beach; and Edward Douglas, Okeechobee.

Programs and impact on the community were diverse. These ranged from food distribution after

Each church was represented and shared both its successes and unmet challenges.

led the youth Sabbath School discussion of the Sabbath, and Pastor Ray Winborne of Charleston did the same for the adults.

A highlight of the meetings was a panel discussion during the afternoon. Each church was represented and shared both its successes and unmet challenges in being "More Like the Master Where We Live." Panel members were Jasmine Lynch, Miami; Lettie Bond and Martha Scull, Bradenton;

Hurricane Hugo (Charleston), to cemetery spaces for the poor of the community (Palatka), to involvement in community programs such as hospice and family welfare (Daytona Beach and Bradenton), to gospel concerts and other special events (Miami and Okeechobee). It is impossible to mention all the ways in which our churches are representing Christ to their communities, but the discussion was stimulating. Ideas not yet implemented were mentioned by various panel members. Several people spoke of gleaning new ideas to take back home with them. In fact, this sharing of ideas is one of the very important parts of our Churches Day.

Enriching our worship were several special musical numbers. Luis Lovelace and Terry Durst presented solos. There were duets by Grace and John Mark Camenga, Terry Durst and Marybeth Crane, and Leland and Lettie Bond. A quartet from Daytona Beach—Charles North, Alan Crouch, Audrey Fuller, and Janette Crouch—presented a number. Owen and Jasmine Lynch, Andrew and Kay Samuels, and Beverlee Newman made up a vocal ensemble from Miami. *SR*

The SR on war

I had an increased awareness of death in January, especially as the days sped toward the deadline. Not for the magazine, but for war.

The Shield turned into a Storm. "Death in the Family" could affect thousands.

Looking through the older issues for the "Almanac," an eerie thought loomed. Going back 25 years was Vietnam. Two score and 10 years ago was World War II. And 1916 saw the first World War. What is this—humanity can't stand more than 25 years between wars?

I pray that the war is over even

before this issue goes to press. That brings me to the point:

While we cannot provide adequate coverage of world events, we do not wish to ignore them. Thanks to modern media most of us can listen to or even view events while they happen.

As a monthly magazine with weeks of lag time, how can we compete?

We don't. We can offer our views, suggestions for prayer, and a rallying cry for some sanity.

Thank you for your readership, patience, and support.

The Editor

Finding reconciliation in the Philippines

by Rev. Rodney Henry

Rev. Gabriel Bejjani and I arrived in the Philippines at the end of November to meet with members of both the SDB Convention and Conference.

It was quite apparent to both of us that the Lord had done a great deal of preparation in the hearts of the Filipino SDBs. The beginnings of reconciliation between the groups had already begun before our arrival.

In all of our discussions with Rev. Paypa and the Convention, as well as with Rev. Ferraren and the Conference, it was clear that

Convention does not believe that it is a theological issue. It was agreed to allow that matter to come under the freedom of conscience of the individual believer.

After working on the theological differences, we began to discuss ways to lessen the tension and conflict. Both sides wanted to be reconciled. At the same time, there was still too much suspicion and mistrust. We discussed how forgiveness is immediate but trust is something that is earned over time.

They agreed that the fighting and criticism would stop immediately. There was a joint meeting of

ascertain the numerical strength of either the Convention or the Conference. We believe that they have about the same number of churches and members (six churches with about 120 members). The Conference, however, does own some church property, which is not the case with the Convention.

The first area of cooperation between the Conference and Convention will be the training of pastors. Rev. Paypa will be training pastors from both the Convention and the Conference in their Training in Ministry and Extension (T.I.M.E.) program. The finances for this will be worked out by the Unity Committee.

After the departure of Rev. Bejjani, I spent two and one-half days with Rev. Paypa to assist in revising the old Pastors Training Course (now called T.I.M.E.).

Regarding the T.I.M.E. program in the Philippines, we have two recommendations:

1. That Rev. Paypa be sent \$150 per year for the next two years to complete his theological education at Baptist Theological College (BTC). This will greatly enhance his stature and the overall credibility of the T.I.M.E. program.

2. That a guest from the United States be sent to teach "SDB Philosophy" to the pastors and students of the T.I.M.E. program in the Philippines. This will also heighten the credibility of the program and also insure accurate teaching of SDB doctrine about the Sabbath, salvation, the church, and history. This guest would go about every two or three years.

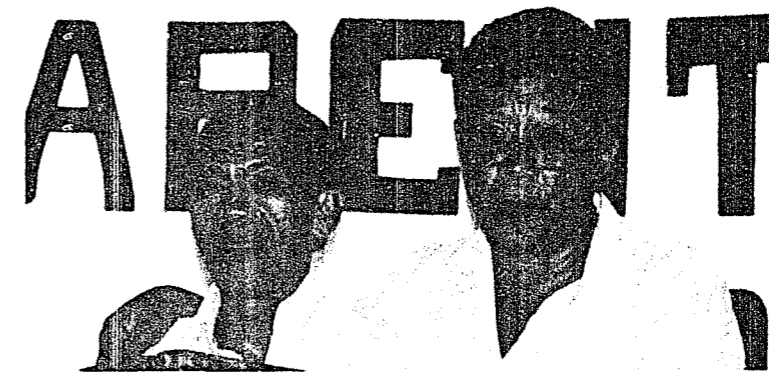
We do not pretend to have solved all of the problems with Filipino SDBs. We do hope and pray that a method has been developed that can provide for working toward harmony and cooperation. *SR*

the Conference and Convention where, we believe, genuine reconciliation took place. Rev. Bejjani presented a very good message on reconciliation and criticism.

At that joint meeting, both sides agreed to the concepts for the unity between the Convention and Conference. Guidelines were drafted and signed by Rev. Paypa and Rev. Ferraren.

The Convention has nothing to lose in this bid for unity. They are the ones recognized by World Federation. Also, they are the ones receiving money from the Missionary Society. The Convention remains independent in every way.

It was very difficult to fully



Revs. Eli Paypa and Eleazar Ferraren.

everyone wanted the tension and conflict between the SDBs to be resolved. Yet, we did not want peace at any cost.

There were two main issues which have divided the Convention and the Conference. The most important difference was on the doctrine of salvation. The Conference has always believed on salvation by keeping the law (works). It was over this issue that churches separated from the Conference and the new Convention began.

The second main issue that had to be resolved was the matter of "unclean foods." The Conference preaches and teaches against eating the "unclean foods." The

SHOULD BE
HERE

December		\$754,485
November	December Giving	\$691,611
October	Investment Income (est) November Giving	\$628,738
September	Investment Income (est) October Giving	\$565,864
August	Investment Income (est) September Giving	\$502,990
July	Investment Income (est) August Giving	\$440,116
June	Investment Income (est) July Giving	\$377,243
May	Investment Income (est) June Giving	\$314,364
April	Investment Income (est) May Giving	\$251,495
March	Investment Income (est) April Giving	\$188,621
February	Investment Income (est) March Giving	\$125,748
January	Investment Income (est) February Giving	\$62,873

1990 income needed—\$754,485.
Per month gift income needed—\$33,351.
Total needed each month—\$62,873.

Encouraging Words

Here's a new feature which will really depend on our readers.

We will present a situation or need which may arise in many of our churches, then ask you for your help. We want to know how you or your church handled it—your insights, frustrations, and victories.

It will be a tangible and exciting way to follow the Bible's admoni-

tion to "encourage one another."

You may not always see a "heavy" topic because we can also encourage each other with the joy of the Lord.

It would help to keep your answers concise—100 words or less. If you send your letter right away, it may appear the following month.

Here's our February plea for Encouraging Words:

"Our church has a time for 'sharing' various joys and concerns during Sabbath morning worship. But some members seem to feel free to share for an extended time, and do so every week. Instead of edifying the Lord, it seems to detract from our worship.

What can we do about handling this time better?"

Please send your Encouraging Words right away to:
SDB Center
P.O. Box 1678
Janesville, WI 53547

Or, if you prefer to call, you may telephone us at:
(608) 752-5055
Please ask for Muriel.

SR Reaction

The Sabbath Recorder:

I am returning the cover of the December Recorder [on the New Age]. I do not believe that it represents the best image of our wonderful denomination. At any time of year, but let us not forget the Love of Christ and this beautiful Christmas season.

As a member of the Salem church for 65 years, I am distressed at some of the ways that we present ourselves. The cover on a Recorder some years ago which showed a scene from here in West Virginia was not at all a representative

depiction of the dignity that we in the Salem church have always appreciated with such leadership as Dr. Gardiner, Rev. A.J.C. Bond, George B. Shaw, Rev. Skaggs, and now Pastor Ken.

I was particularly pleased with the eulogy carried on Paul Maxson, a fine gentleman always, who must have been truly appreciated by the folks at the Berlin church.

Donation enclosed.

Yours very truly,
Sandford F. Randolph
Bridgeport, W.Va.

Accessions

Adams Center, NY
Gene Smith, pastor

Joined after testimony
Robert S. Clement
Anne M. Clement

Battle Creek, MI

Joined after baptism
Walter Kidder

Joined after testimony
Henry O. Davis
Mary Davis

Bay Area, CA
Steven Crouch, pastor

Joined after testimony
Bill Hartzell
Sharon Hartzell

Columbus, OH
Robert Van Horn, pastor

Joined by letter
Robert Van Horn
Lana Van Horn

Miami, FL
Andy Samuels, pastor

Joined by baptism
Raphelito Wellington
Seleta Cox

Joined by testimony
Myrtle Miller
Ann Newman
Veronica Johnson
Heather Muschette

Nortonville, KS
Robert Harris, pastor

Joined after baptism
Angela Stapp

Richburg, NY
Stephan F. Saunders, pastor

Joined after baptism
Monica Cunha

**Sunshine Mountain
Chatawa, MS**
Ralph Hays, pastor

Joined after testimony
Shawn Jorgensen

Oklahoma City Fellowship, OK
L.B. Lee Sr., pastor

Joined after baptism
Jennifer Harness
Robert Harness
Amanda Harness

Joined by letter
Ruth Neely
Jamie Harness

Births

Sanford.—A son, Caleb Mark Sanford, was born to Douglas and Renée (Stoney) Sanford of Stoughton, WI, on September 28, 1990.

Miller.—A daughter, Miranda Rae Miller, was born to Randy and Kathleen (Spencer) Miller of Morgantown, WV, on November 1, 1990.

Jorgensen.—A daughter, Tiffany Marie Jorgensen, was born to Shawn and Cherie Jorgensen of Chatawa, MS, on November 5, 1990.

Greene.—A daughter, Damian Joy Greene, was born to Wesley and Martha Greene of Wooster, OH, on November 6, 1990.

Sukie.—A daughter, Candace Sara Sukie, was born to Desmond and Lorna Sukie of Miami, FL, on November 20, 1990.

Campbell.—A son, Chadwick Christopher Weston Campbell, was born to Phillip and Marlene (Samuels) Campbell of Plainfield, NJ, on December 1, 1990.

McNeme.—A son, Geoffrey Wynn McNeme, was born to Steve and Vivian (Bass) McNeme in Somers, MT, on December 21, 1990.

Osborn.—A son, Jared Keith Osborn, was born to Joel and Doneta (Richards) Osborn of Madison, WI, on January 6, 1991.

Marriages

Lewis-Murray.—Roy Lewis and Merline Murray were united in marriage on November 7, 1990, at the home of David and Kathy Webb. The Rev. David Webb officiated.

Barth-Martin.—Steven P. Barth and Tammy Martin were united in marriage on December 7, 1990, at the Richburg (NY)

Seventh Day Baptist Church. The Rev. Stephan F. Saunders officiated.

Spencer-Orwig.—Dr. Frederick A. Spencer and Jeanette A. Orwig were united in marriage on December 22, 1990, at the Salem (WV) Seventh Day Baptist Church. The Rev. Dr. Melvin G. Nida officiated.

Zwiebel.—Doyle K. Zwiebel, 58, of Salem, West Virginia, died on December 23, 1990, at his home. He was born on December 20, 1932, in Jackson Center, Ohio, the son of George M. and Althea H. Zwiebel. He graduated from Salem College in 1954 with a bachelor's degree (cum laude); from Alfred (New York) University School of Theology in 1958, B.D.; and from Alfred University in 1964, M.S. Ed. He was registrar of Salem-Teikyo University, where he had served for the past 30 years.

Doyle, who chose not to be ordained but considered himself as a lay minister serving the church of his membership, pastored several Seventh Day Baptist churches:

Albion-Milton Junction, Wisconsin, interim pastor, 1955-56; Pawcatuck, Rhode Island, assistant pastor, 1956; Richburg, New York, 1956-1960; and Middle Island, West Virginia, 1960-1990.

Doyle was editor of *The Joyful News*, the Camp Joy quarterly newsletter; and *Echoes from Fort New Salem*, the monthly publication of Fort New Salem. He edited the SDB Southeastern Association's *Good News Letter* for many years and served two terms on the Salem City Council.

Survivors include his wife of 35 years, I. Marie (Bee) Zwiebel; one son, H. Kent of Bridgeport, West Virginia; one daughter, Veronica Sperry of Jacksonville, Florida; two

brothers, Rex E. of Rochester, New York, and Carl of Jackson Center; and three sisters, Sandra Mitchell and Phyllis Judy, both of Jackson Center, and Nadine Horvath of Agra, Oklahoma. He was preceded in death by one son, Kevin, who died at age 8 in 1968.

By his signed request, Doyle's body was donated to the University of West Virginia Medical School. A memorial service was held on December 29, 1990, at the Salem Seventh Day Baptist Church, with the Revs. S. Kenneth Davis and Dr. Melvin G. Nida officiating. Memorial donations may be made to Camp Joy, c/o Clayton Pinder, treasurer, 112 State Street, Salem, WV 26426.

(A special tribute to Doyle Zwiebel will appear in next month's SR.)

Pearls, cont. from page 14

as lay pastor in Waterford, Connecticut, Hebron, Pennsylvania, and for the first year of his married life, he and Mother served in home mission work at Fouke, Arkansas, as pastor and teachers. I have no idea how many times he stood in this very pulpit proclaiming the word of God which he believed and lived. When Pastor Harley Sutton left Little Genesee, I recall his mentioning that laymen such as Dad were far more important to any church than was the pastor. The pastor often had an option: he could leave and try his hand in other circumstances; but the real test of faith rested among those whose lives were the backbone of the church, and who were called to work through any situation, no matter how frustrating it might be.

With the nearness to the seminary at Alfred during much of Dad's life, this church became a testing ground for several seminarians and fresh graduates. I have

heard a number of testimonies to the influence which he had upon their lives. At a time when the metal is red hot, the craftsman's work is most effective. At a time when young lives are most malleable, the hammer of dedicated service is most influential.

Yet I am reminded that it is not by one's service, no matter how dedicated it may be, that one is saved. A good neighbor is not necessarily a good Christian, for it is by faith in Jesus Christ that we have the promise and the assurance of life eternal. This is the anvil upon which the life of a Christian is wrought and transformed from a simple piece of raw material to a functioning remembrance of love and the holder of light. Just as the central emblem of these two candelabra is the cross, so the center of a Christian's life must be the cross of Jesus Christ....

The hammer is still; the breath of the forge of his life has departed

from our midst, but the anvil of his faith is still solid, and the works of his mighty arm can be seen here in this church and in many homes in our land. It is seen in such places as Camp Harley Sutton, in the community center across the road, and in countless other reminders of his leadership and work. If there be any virtue, any inspiration in the lives of his children and grandchildren, grant me the honor of saying that the anvil of his faith has helped in the shaping.

Let us pray:

By the breath of Thy Holy Spirit, rekindle in us the holy fire which has forged the character of the one now in thy special presence. Bend our stubborn wills into forms of beauty and utility upon the anvil of faith. Weld each of us together into thy Church. Place the cross of Jesus Christ at the center of our being. And help us to provide light in our world, even as Christ was the light of the world. Amen. *SR*

RECORDER

Dear Dad,

Thanks for your letter. Sounds like you had quite a busy Christmas. I can imagine how much you enjoy the reminiscing as you compile your church's history.

Speaking of reminiscing, how about going back to 1979? Remember how my college graduation would precede (by one day) the beginning of a new career with that large company which "brings good things to life"? Then, a few months later, there would be a Mr. and Mrs. Kevin Butler. All the plans!! Closing on the house, getting new appliances; wedding plans, honeymoon plans, plans for our life together—

All halted by funeral and burial plans. Mom died one week before I was to graduate.

I know how she suffered with obesity and diabetes, but hers was still a sudden, unexpected death.

I'll never forget how you came to watch as I walked numbly through the graduation ceremony. Got my diploma. Said goodbye to friends.

Next day began my new job. I don't think I ever told you that Mom's last note to me was to say how proud you were that I'd be working with you at GE.

I was so busy bringing good things to life, and building foundations for our married life—I never dealt with death. I never really grieved. I mean, how could I? A tough college grad, all grown up, keeping that stiff upper lip...

All that pain and loss has been diverted for nearly 12 years. Our next Recorder issue is on "Death in the Family" so maybe I've been dwelling on this too much. But the plain truth is, I miss Mom.

Being away from her during school caused some separation, and after her death maybe I felt that we were still simply apart for a time. She's not coming back—until He comes back.

All my plans. I'm so frustrated that I couldn't set aside me long enough to deal with her loss. Now I'm paying for it. Part of me has been dying slowly for more than a decade. Losing joy, losing self; at times losing touch with real life because I haven't coped with real death.

Just this past six months it seems like memories of her were hitting me left and right. On our visit with you last summer you gave us those laminated obituaries and that big box full of photo albums; Mom growing up, your courtship and marriage. A letter after that contained a copy of her death certificate. In October we visited her grave together. Then for Christmas you finished printing your mother's memoirs, with her wonderful perceptions of her daughter-in-law. Your wife. My Mom.

I wonder if you're realizing it's time for me to face up to it all, to talk about it. If that's happening, I'm getting the message. And if it wasn't your intention, then some other Father is sending strong signals.

I want to stop being the silent Stoic. It hurts, and I want to get it out. Growing up, I saw how "keeping things in" could literally eat someone up as you suffered two bleeding ulcers and a heart attack.

The Recorder will urge the readers to get it out: to talk about their husbands, and Grandmas, and children.

Remember how I dedicated my first issue to you? Well, this next one goes out to Betty Jean Jackson Butler.

Let's talk about Mom the next time we're together, okay? I think she'd like that.

Thanks for being there, Dad.

All my love,
Kev

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Robe of Achievement

The Women's Society is accepting nominations for the Robe of Achievement for 1991. 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 nominated before, and you still want that person considered, please re-submit the name as well as the resumé.

Send all nominations to: Elizabeth Bidwell, P.O. Box 136, Shiloh, NJ 08353

Deadline: May 31, 1991

For Sale (Make an offer)

Mimeograph machine
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Excellent condition
Supply of stencils and
ink included

Lost Creek (WV)
Seventh Day Baptist Church
Contact: Susan Bond
(304) 884-8897

In the next $\$R$:

Called to Obedience—
A closer look at this year's
Conference theme
