

The **S**abbath
Recorder

Celebrating 150 Years
1844-1994

April 1994



Reaching out to our Jewish friends

Upcoming Events

April 15-17
Semi-Annual Meetings
New Auburn, WI

May 1-2
Historical Society Annual
Meeting, Janesville, WI

May 6-8
Allegheny Association
Little Genesee, NY

May 13-15
Eastern Association
Shiloh, NJ

May 21
Sabbath Emphasis Day

May 31—June 17
Summer Institute (History
and Polity) Janesville

June 13
Sabbath Recorder
150th Anniversary

June 17-26
SCSC Training
Boulder, CO

August 3-7
Pre-Con camps, Kansas

August 7-13
General Conference
Lindsborg, KS

"I enjoy the Recorder tapes. John Bach does well narrating them. I get talking books and a good voice is most important."

It's nice to receive grateful letters like this one from Genevieve Stone in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. If you know someone who needs *The Sabbath Recorder* narrated on audio cassettes, please write:

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Seventh Day Baptist Center
P.O. Box 1678
Janesville WI 53547

Jamaican Mini-Missions Project

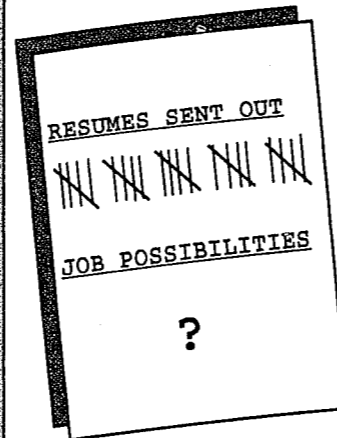
Remember reading about Sue Cartwright's missions trip to Jamaica last year? Well, plans for the "Summer '94 Music Project" are under way.

Funds are still needed for materials and transportation costs. Please designate your

donations to Sue Cartwright, and send them (by June 15) to:

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The Sabbath Recorder



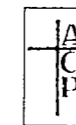
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Who are Seventh Day Baptists?

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. Phone (608) 752-5055; FAX (608) 752-7711

Messianic Jews—our Sabbathkeeping neighbors

by W.L. "Lou" Acker

Our heritage

As Seventh Day Baptists, we have a rich American heritage that dates back to the 1600s. Most of our Sabbatarian neighbors are relatively young denominations, springing from religious movements between 1844 and the early 1920s. Many of these groups not only adopted the Saturday Sabbath, they also observe God's festivals and Holy Days. They consider God's commandments to be applicable to all mankind, as opposed to the popular Christian view that these commandments applied only to the Jews.

As members of the Christian faith, we have a rich Jewish heritage because of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Our Lord didn't come simply to start a religious movement, but His ministry made such an impact that Christianity has been presented to nearly every country in the world.

Originally, Jesus' followers were predominantly Jewish, with a few Gentiles. Amazingly, this condition lasted for the first 300 years of the Church, but growth included more and more Gentiles who eventually became a majority. When this occurred, the Church began to change. Christianity soon began to emphasize Gentile customs and traditions, and de-emphasized things Jewish—including changing the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday.

I'd like to direct your attention to a relatively new group of Sabbatarian neighbors and invite you to re-examine our Jewish roots, including our early Church customs and traditions. This group of Sabbatarians prefer to be called "Messianic



Jews," and they have a remarkable resemblance to the first century Church.

Why do we need to concern ourselves with this group? Because I feel the time is ripe for us to again evangelize among the Jews. There is much activity occurring in the world that indicates acceleration to the end time may have started. In a very short span of time, we've seen the Berlin Wall pulled down, the dissolving of the Soviet Union, and the formation of republics struggling to set up democratic forms of government.

The early believers

By examining the history of the

first century Church, we can see that Christianity would not have existed except for Messianic Judaism. Those Jews who chose to follow Jesus, and accepted Him as the one sent by the Father, became members of a sect within Judaism.

We know from reading the Scriptures that Jesus and His disciples ministered within the Jewish community, teaching in the synagogues on the Sabbath. Eventually, the Messianic Jews were expelled from the synagogues. They began to meet in private homes or wherever they could enjoy fellowship with other believers. Messianic Judaism thrived until the end of the fourth century. The movement gradually

disappeared, and they were overwhelmed by Gentile Christianity.

Today's movement

Messianic Judaism is back! According to one author, Paul Liberman, thousands of Jewish people are now accepting Jesus as the Messiah. Liberman chose *The Fig Tree Blossoms* as the title for his book, since the fig tree is a biblical symbol for the Jewish people. Liberman points out that, "The Scriptures foretold that Jerusalem would be conquered and its citizens led away in captivity. They would endure it through a period referred to as a time of the Gentiles—a time when governmental power over Israel was entrusted by God to the Gentile nations. Nation after nation has occupied Israel."

Many of today's scholars and prophecy teachers are pointing to the fact that the Bible tells us that the Jews would return to the land. Many also agree that the Gentile age may have ended in 1967 when Jerusalem was back under the control of the Jews. Liberman contends that this signals the ushering in of a new era, when God would "once again start to move spiritually and physically among His Jewish people."

When the disciples asked Yeshua (Jesus) what would be the sign of the end time, He told them to learn the parable of the fig tree. He told them that when the fig tree blossomed, summer was close at hand. He was saying, in effect, to note the signs of the time.

Similarly, when the symbolic fig tree (Israel) would come to life, unusual events would begin to transpire—and the Second Coming of Messiah would take place. Throughout Israel today, there are automobiles bearing bumper stickers encouraging all to prepare for the coming Messiah.

Peter and Paul Lelonde are two brothers in Canada who have a television ministry which compares biblical prophecy with current

events. In a recent broadcast, they pointed out that the Hebrew language was "dead" for several hundred years, but it is the official language in Israel, being taught from kindergarten to high school. One surprising fact is that students are learning from the Old Testament, as expected, and even from the New Testament—but not for spiritual reasons. High school students in Israel are being instructed in the New Testament because the number one industry is tourism!

Judaism is the predominant religion among the Jews in Israel, yet there are several Messianic Jewish congregations. Most have to keep a low profile, and the government has tried to deport several Jewish believers from the land. Business people, school children, and newly-arrived citizens have been harassed because they have accepted Jesus as Messiah. Those who practice Judaism are hard on their Jewish neighbors who believe in Jesus—but they are very tolerant toward Christian tourists because it's good for business.

Acceptance/Rejection

Historically, whenever a Jew accepted Yeshua (Jesus) as the Messiah and accepted the New Testament as God's Holy Word, he was rejected by friends and family as a turncoat or traitor. He was excluded from the Jewish community and, thereafter, considered a Gentile. In some cases, Jewish believers have even been "written off" by family members with a funeral service. In the minds of the family members, the believer no longer exists.

Conversely, the Christian Church accepted the new believer and told him in subtle ways that he was no longer Jewish. They encouraged him to give up "Jewish" things and adopt Christian ways. In other words, he was a *convert*. This practice is still going on in Jewish families in both the United States and in Israel.

This "convert" attitude prevails in a lot of Christian churches, but Jewish believers are "coming out of the closet." They see no inconsistency between their acceptance of Jesus as their personal savior and their remaining Jewish.

Back to roots

Since 1967, a greater Jewish consciousness has emerged. There is strong evidence suggesting that more Jews have accepted Yeshua (Jesus) as the Messiah since the Six Day War than in all the previous 1900 years combined. It has marked the beginning of an era when Jews who have accepted Yeshua no longer wished to be absorbed into traditional church institutions. They have sought out fellow believers, set up Jewish fellowships, and prefer to be called "Messianic Jews."

Although modern Messianic Judaism was born in 1967, the movement didn't officially begin to blossom until 1975. That year, about 600 Messianic Jews met at a national conference called "Messiah '75." There, leaders from all over the United States, Europe, and Israel discussed the role of Messianic Jews in relation to traditional Judaism. Tradition said that Judaism and Christianity are separate and distinct. This belief is now being challenged by Messianic Jews who accept both the Old Testament and the New Testament as valid. For such Jews, the long-awaited Messiah has come.

Messianic Judaism is not a new cult seeking to separate itself from the body of believers. It offers a way to reconcile belief in the Messiah while confirming one's Jewishness. One of the tenets of Messianic Judaism asserts that when a Jew accepts a Jewish Messiah, born in a Jewish land, who was foretold by Jewish prophets in the Jewish Scriptures, such a Jew does not become a converted Gentile—he becomes a *completed Jew*.

One reason the Christian

Church has been so unsuccessful in bringing the Gospel to the Jewish people is tied to its failure to recognize that every Jew, no matter how irreligious, knows he was born a Jew, and he will die a Jew. Any concept that threatens that view is doomed to fail. Unwittingly, Christians have erred by insisting that Jews give up their identification and "become Christian."

Another factor to be considered by the Christian Church is that Jews tend to lump all Christian religions together. They may not distinguish between Catholic, Protestant, and other denominations who use the *cross* as a symbol. In most cases, Jews are offended by such symbols because of their collective memory of the Inquisition, the Holocaust, and social discrimination. During World War II, when the Nazis were rounding up Jews to put them in death camps, "the Church" kept silent. Only a few Christians risked everything to bravely hide the Jews from the Nazis.

Some pointers

If we are to successfully present the Gospel to our Jewish friends and neighbors, there are a few pointers we should learn before we begin to evangelize to the Jews:

- Unfortunately, the name "Jesus Christ" can become a barrier to communication because so much wrong has been done to Jews by

people professing to be His followers. Most Jews know Jesus by His Hebrew name, "Yeshua," which means "salvation." Most Jews know the long-expected Messiah is referred to as "the anointed one," expressed in Hebrew as "Ha Mashiach." So how did we get from the Hebrew name and title to "Jesus Christ"? When "Yeshua Ha Mashiach" was translated into Greek, it became "Jesus Christos." Then it was anglicized to "Jesus Christ" when the Bible was translated into English.

If you speak to a Jew about Messiah, he will be more receptive if you refer to Him as Yeshua Ha Mashiach. He has already heard about Yeshua—he just has not come to discover Him as the Messiah. The Jew understands that you are talking about the historical Nazarene who told the Jewish people that He was the one they were expecting. Modern Jews who accept Jesus usually do so by examining all the Scriptures that describe the "anointed one," compare them to the life of Jesus, and discover that only one man in the history of the world fulfilled every prophecy. The Jew will then recognize that Messiah came—and He is coming again.

- Stay away from the word "converted." I am a native Texan. I was born a Texan, and I will die a Texan—even if I die in New York

City! A Jew who has accepted Yeshua Ha Mashiach should be referred to as a *completed Jew*.

- A completed Jew will probably be uncomfortable being called a Christian. The word "believer" has become the accepted term

to describe the new status of a Messianic Jew.

- Many Jews associate the *cross* with the "Christians" who gave us the Holocaust, the Inquisition, and the other bad memories. Try not to wear such symbols when talking about Messiah to your Jewish friends and neighbors. And refer to Messiah's sacrificial death for our sins by referring to the "tree," or the "execution stake," instead of the cross.

- Rather than giving your Jewish friend a New Testament, give him a single copy of the Book of John. This method of evangelizing has proven to be very successful in presenting Messiah to Jews.

When a Gentile accepts Jesus as his personal savior, he is welcomed into the fold. And in most instances, he receives support and words of encouragement from family and friends. When a Jew accepts Yeshua Ha Mashiach, his family may declare him "dead," his neighbors may shun him, his boss may fire him, and he more than likely will be "written off" as Gentile. It is very important that we realize the personal sacrifice that the Jewish believer has made in declaring his discovery of Messiah. But it is even more important that we encourage him in ways that don't require him to give up his Jewish identity. ✠

If you would like more information about modern Messianic Judaism and the work of our Sabbath-keeper neighbors, write to:

Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations
8556 E. Warren Ave.
Denver, CO 80231-3337

The Association of Messianic Believers
11727 North Evelyn Circle
Houston, TX 77071

Lou Acker, from Mesquite, Texas, is a recent graduate of the SDB Training In Ministry and Extension (T.I.M.E.) program.

Who? Me? Witness to a Jewish person?

by Scott C. Rubin



"I always parroted what I heard my teachers in high school and college say: 'There is no such thing as a foolish question,'" says Moishe Rosen, founder/director of Jews for Jesus. "For me, it was an article of faith. Then I discovered there were many foolish questions. One of the most foolish is: 'Who can witness to Jews better, a Jewish Christian or a Gentile Christian?'"

Dr. Rosen is troubled by a phenomenon that every Jewish believer in Y'shua (that's the Jewish way to say Jesus) has encountered over and over again. He says it's as if the J.C. Penney catalog offered witnessing methods and rated them "Good," "Better," and "Best." God uses faithful people. God

uses people who love Him. God uses people who are willing to take a stand and risk the displeasure of the world. It's that simple.

Gentile witnesses

Most Jews come to Christ because a Gentile friend witnesses to them. If there is ever a time when there are more Jewish Christians than there are Gentile Christians, that will change.

I think of dear Mrs. Wilhelm, whose only connection to me was that her son lived in the same dormitory as I did. One summer day, I told Mrs. Wilhelm that Christians thought Jews were Christ-killers. She kindly responded, "Scott, Jesus died for our sins." We talked much

more, and the Gospel seed was planted.

I once dated a girl who claimed Jesus meant a lot to her. (He didn't mean enough to keep her from dating me—an unbeliever.) But her testimony, no matter how feeble, counted. Her sister and her brother-in-law told me things about God, the Bible, and Jesus that convicted me. The Holy Spirit did the convincing. But the fact that they're not Jewish doesn't mean that they were ineffective in witnessing to me, a Jew.

They'll be offended

Here's a foolish question I've been asked more and more recently: "Isn't there some way that we can witness to Jews without offending them?"

My answer is just as foolish as the question: "Sure, don't tell them about Jesus."

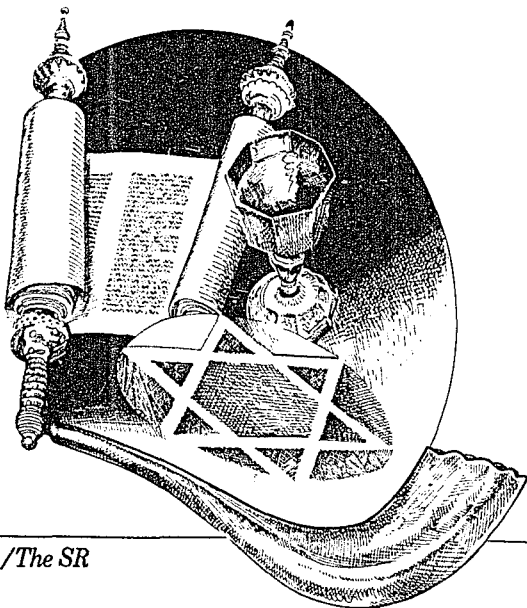
Don't worry if your Jewish friends seem offended. Our culture is different, and some of us flash anger faster than others. Jews know Christians want to convert us. The thought doesn't please us, but we would expect a true Christian to attempt to tell us about Jesus.

Sincerity over technique

Don't worry about technique. Some modern literature on Jewish evangelism says, "Don't invite them to church, but to a messianic congregation."

As the pastor of one of the two messianic congregations affiliated with the Baptist General Conference, I urge you to invite your Jewish friend to the church you love.

cont. next page



After I was saved and baptized, I joined an evangelical church. I didn't feel I was any less Jewish; in fact, other Jewish believers in Jesus encouraged me to grow where I was.

The congregation I went to had several Jews in membership. As I matured in Christ, took family responsibilities and had children, I realized I wanted to convey some of my heritage to my sons.

But don't worry about witness-

Focus on the need that we must be saved from ourselves and our own destructive tendencies.

ing "the Jewish way." Don't worry about making mistakes. If the Holy Spirit is moving you, just do it.

Jesus' command

You can know that the Holy spirit is moving you to witness to Jews, because the Holy Spirit superintended the writing of the Scriptures that record Jesus' words, "Go and make disciples of all the nations" (Matt. 28:19), and "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). You don't need a special anointing to witness.

Born again

Most Jewish people who have come to faith in Christ did not become acquainted with the messianic prophecies until after they became believers. For the most part, it was the person of Jesus, His teachings, His life, His miracles that drew them.

Witness to a Jewish person the way you'd witness to anyone else.

Jesus said, "No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again" (John 3:3). He wasn't speaking to a Scotsman or a Swede. Being born again is something that you need to explain to Jewish people in the same way that Jesus needed to explain it to Nicodemus.

Important concepts: Sin, salvation, Savior

Next, there are three concepts that need explanation to Jewish people: sin, salvation, and Savior. The bad news is that we are sinners. But a Jewish friend told me that the beginning of the good news gave him relief. He was heartened when he heard that "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23), and "All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6).

Now that might not sound like good news to you, but my friend said when he discovered *all* were sinners, it meant he was normal. The Law made him feel guilty, because he knew he really hadn't tried to follow the Law. He knew that if God existed, He was surely displeased. So, the concept that all had sinned was a starting point of good news. And from there on, it gets even better.

Will you meet objections? Sure. You will need to explain sin as a characteristic all people have, that it is not limited to specific actions. Each of us has many sinful thoughts each day, and these thoughts, even without the actions, would be enough to separate us from our Holy God. This separation keeps us from being able to know God and serve God.

Another objection may be the need for salvation. Most Jews today are not taught about the reality of heaven and hell, so there is no reason to be saved from eternal doom. Rather than debate heavy spiritual realities, focus on the need that we must be saved from ourselves and our own destructive tendencies.

Stress the fact that salvation is a present-day reality, a vital relationship with God that He wants to give us.

Finally, you may need to answer questions regarding the need for a personal Savior. Rather than get sidetracked with issues such as Jesus' deity or His virgin birth, focus on His work on the cross. Stress Jesus as the sin-bearer. You can come back to the objections later.

Read the Bible

Use the Bible in your witnessing. Don't be surprised if your Jewish friends don't own a Bible, or if the Bible they own doesn't contain the New Testament. Encourage them to pick up a Bible at a bookstore, even help in its selection. (Recommend a modern translation.)

We are all able to be witnesses for our Lord to unbelievers of every nationality, because of the marvelous work He did. *SR*

Scott Rubin is pastor of Congregation Tiferet Israel, a Baptist General Conference church in San Francisco, Calif.

Jewish believer encourages witnessing

In her book *Pursued*, published by Regal books, Vera Schlamm, a Jewish survivor of the Holocaust, describes the miracles God used to help her family endure the Holocaust and to bring her to the Messiah. Vera is a member of La Crescenta (Calif.) Baptist Church. She is active in Shalom Fellowship, a group of believers who witness to the Jewish community.

Vera says: "The most wonderful event in my life was finding Jesus as my Messiah. It was the practice of some of the following do's and don'ts by a loving pastor of the Baptist General Conference that helped me make that decision."

(Those Do's and Don'ts appear on the next page.)

Seventh Day Baptists reach out to Sabbathkeeping Jews—in the 1800s

In 1834, members of the SDB Missionary Society chose to expand their mission. In New York City alone, there were thousands of Jews who were observing the biblical Sabbath. Converted to Christianity, they could find a ready home among Seventh Day Baptists since there already existed a common bond in the observance of the Sabbath. There was also the reasonable hope that a Christian denomination preaching Christ as not in any wise destroying the law of the prophets might receive a favorable hearing.

A separate society was established in 1838 called "The American Seventh-day Baptist Society for the Promotion of Christianity Among the Jews." Their work was short-lived for they experienced difficulties in six areas: 1) The great proportion of foreigners among the Jews were not sufficiently fluent in English to understand the preach-

ing. 2) There was a general lack of spirituality among those who had little regard for their own worship on the Sabbath. 3) Their bias favored their own religion. 4) Those who understood Hebrew rejected the English translations of the Scriptures. 5) The doctrine of the divinity of Jesus appeared as blasphemy involving strange gods. 6) There was strong prejudice against the Christian religion induced by the Jews' great suffering under Christian powers.

In 1840, the emphasis shifted from the employment of missionaries to tract and publications work, so the name of the society was changed to "American Evangelical Board of Directors for Disseminating Religious Truth among Jews." This new organization met the same difficulties others experienced, so by 1843 its work, but not its interest, ceased.

It was proposed, in 1852, that a

mission to Palestine might not face the same problems encountered with the immigrant Jews in America. The following year, it was resolved to establish such a mission with Rev. William Jones as the missionary, linking this effort with an industrial or agricultural mission. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Saunders were chosen to head this part of the mission.

In 1854, Rev. and Mrs. Jones and Mr. and Mrs. Saunders settled temporarily in Jaffa while they looked for a favorable spot for the agricultural mission. The agricultural portion of the mission met insurmountable odds because of the limited budget and the political, social, and cultural barriers which existed. William Jones had limited success in Jerusalem until ill health and other circumstances prevented the establishment of a permanent mission there. In 1859, lack of support forced the closing of the mission effort, and the missionaries were called home.

About 25 years later, Seventh Day Baptists again became involved in a mission to Jews. Theophilus Lucky, a Christian Jew, met some Seventh Day Baptists while in seminary and joined the New York City church. Though working independently, he received some support from Seventh Day Baptists in his publishing efforts. For a short time, William C. Daland edited a monthly paper entitled, *The Peculiar People*, which Lucky had begun. By 1890, nearly all efforts of a mission to the Jews were discontinued. *SR*

Excerpted from Don Sanford's book, A Choosing People: The History of Seventh Day Baptists, Broadman Press, 1992.

Do:

- ✧ show genuine love and sensitivity.
- ✧ pray for your friend.
- ✧ explain that a person doesn't stop being Jewish by believing in Jesus.
- ✧ ask questions about the faith, the Jewish Holy Days, views about Israel, how sins are atoned for.
- ✧ read your New Testament with the understanding that it was written by Jewish believers.
- ✧ use Scripture as the Holy Spirit leads.
- ✧ explain that Christians worship the same one God that Jewish people believe in.
- ✧ explain that in God's eyes, sin includes wrong thoughts and attitudes.

©The Standard, Baptist General Conference, Nov. 1993. Reprinted with permission.

Don't:

- ✧ push; let your friend ask questions.
- ✧ think your Jewish friend knows the Scriptures better than you do.
- ✧ assume Jewish believers should do the witnessing; they are seen as traitors.
- ✧ expect all Jewish people to believe the Hebrew Bible.
- ✧ think they understand terms such as "born again," "saved," "washed in the blood," or "Trinity."
- ✧ get discouraged if your friend doesn't seem to be interested. It takes time to adjust to new concepts. My mother prayed to receive her Messiah after 19 years of witness—at age 86.

SR grows in size, number

by John D. Bevis, *Sabbath Recorder* editor 1973-1982

While serving as Assistant Professor of History at Salem (W.Va.) College, I received an unexpected telephone call from Plainfield, N.J. "Would you consider assuming the editorship of *The Sabbath Recorder*?"

After much prayer and discussion with family and friends, including former editor and Salem College President Dr. K.D. Hurley, I accepted the challenge of serving Seventh Day Baptists through the ministry of the printed word. Thus began for me a great adventure for the next nine years (1973-1982).

I have since returned to the classroom, but have great memories of those years with *The Sabbath Recorder* and of many special friends who assisted in the work and gave support and encouragement to me.

Along with teaching history, I recently became aware that I am now a part of history. While in Janesville, Wis., for a meeting of the Historical Society Board, I viewed items on display in the "museum" relating to my years as editor. Somehow I have difficulty seeing myself as a "historical" figure or museum artifact! Where does the time go?

The early changes

My job description was quite involved and challenging as I had three main areas of responsibility. I was editor of *The Sabbath Recorder*, Corresponding Secretary of the American Sabbath Tract Society, and manager of the Seventh Day Baptist Publishing House. Eventually the Board gave me the title of "Publishing Director."

When I became editor, the *Recorder* was a small weekly journal printed in black and white. I remember, with pride, seeing the first

issue I edited come off the press. Printer Henry Poulin brought me the first copy wrapped in a blue ribbon, with the words "Hello Daddy" across it.

The Board soon voted to go to a larger monthly journal printed in color. The Publishing House purchased a new Heidelberg Kord Offset Press, replacing the old letterpress. In January 1974, we introduced the "new" *Recorder* to a very supportive readership.

Our staff was excited over the change. We saw a large increase in subscriptions and received many letters of support, some of which were published in "Recorder Reactions."

One such letter came from our good friend, the U.S. Senator from West Virginia, the Honorable Jennings Randolph. He wrote:

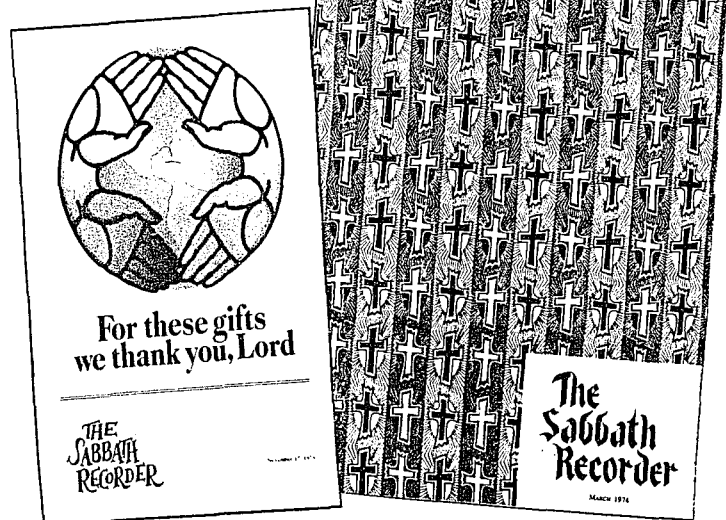
"The January issue is a joy to see... The new *Recorder* retains the intimacy and warmth of the old *Recorder*, but now it is more easily read. Its extended comment and

photographs are certain to assure a ready acceptance. Its regular arrival at our home will bring a friend to visit and help us."

The ministry expands

To me, the editorship was more than a job. It was, in fact, a ministry. In 1976 I wrote: "Throughout the years *The Sabbath Recorder* has been the major channel of communication for Seventh Day Baptists. It is not only a source of denominational news; it is also witness to Seventh Day Baptist beliefs. It is the major denominational journal with national as well as international impact."

A major innovation occurred in developing these lines of communication when the subscription price was discontinued, and the *Recorder* was mailed to all Seventh Day Baptist homes. This is true today, and I would encourage all to respond to

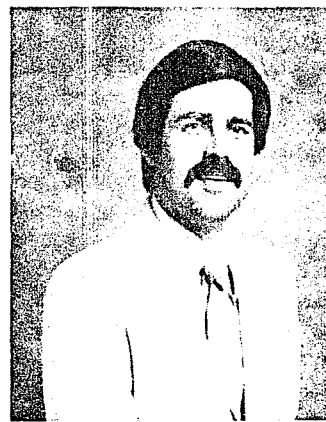


For many years, *The Sabbath Recorder* was a weekly magazine, mailed out on a subscription basis. The journal's size grew as it became a monthly, eventually sent to each SDB home.

the letter you receive inviting your financial support of this much-needed publication.

We made another improvement at the Publishing House when we replaced the Linotype "hot-type" metal system of typesetting with the "cold-type" system. The Compugraphic typesetter was very innovative in its day, and certainly a much quieter and less-involved process. This gave us much more flexibility in layout and design.

About that time, Pat Cruzan was employed part-time as my secre-



John D. Bevis

tary. Her experience and ability in artwork and design was soon evident. She became, in time, the Art Director for the *Recorder* and did much of the art design and layout for all projects published at Plainfield. Many have enjoyed her artwork which frequently adorned the *Recorder* covers during the years of my editorship.

Touchy topics

Sometimes an editor wonders if anyone is "out there" actually reading what is written. However, let him speak to a controversial issue, and he will soon find out he does have readers.

In 1976 we conducted an "Open Forum" on the issue of continued denominational involvement with the World Council of Churches. I think it is accurate to say that a "heated debate" took place in the pages of the *Recorder* for several

months. We attempted to let those on both sides of the issue speak their mind. The issue was decided by vote of the Conference delegates that year, instructing us to withdraw from the W.C.C. by a vote of 355 to 227.

Not all articles submitted to an editor are published, and those "reject" letters often bring interesting reactions from the writer. While serving as pastor in Denver, I was surprised one day to look up from my desk in the church office to see a stranger standing before me. His first words were, "You didn't publish my article!"

I later discovered the man had recently moved from Ohio to Denver and had looked me up. Several years before, he had sent me an unsolicited article about the international date line being incorrect. He advocated that all Sabbathkeepers in the Far East should actually worship on Sunday, since according to his calculations, Sabbath was Sunday, and Sunday was Monday, etc.

He began to attend the Denver church, and we became friends—though he won no converts to his point of view. I was able to minister to him during his final illness and conducted his funeral.

Special features

Over the course of nine years we had many theme issues and special features. In July 1976, we emphasized the SDB connection to the American Revolution as a part of the bicentennial year. Later that year at Conference in Houghton, N.Y., President Gary Cox continued the emphasis. Some will recall many were dressed in period dress, all of this making good copy for the *Recorder*.

One of the features that our readers seemed to enjoy the most was "Personality Profile." Usually the articles were written by someone other than the editor, and focused attention on some interesting person in one of our churches. Some of those featured were: Mabel

West, Karl Stillman, Lillian Crichlow, Conza Meathrell, Charles H. North, Frankie L. Davis, Rua Van Horn, Mildred Jeffrey, Ella Sheppard, and Lotta Bond.

Special visits

As editor, I had opportunity to travel to our churches, Association meetings, and, of course, to Conference each year. In 1978, my family and I, along with Florence Bowden and Marie Kuyper of Shiloh, N.J., visited the Mill Yard SDB Church in England. Then we went on to Holland for the centennial of the Haarlem church. We presented the ladies of Holland with a special quilt pieced by the Women's Societies of the United States. Several *Recorder* articles came from this trip, as did long-lasting friendships with our Dutch and British brethren.

I was always most welcome when visiting the churches. I found our people warm and supportive, and eager to hear of the various ministries in our printing work. Typical of this was a trip I still remember to the New Auburn, Wis., church. I was met at the airport by Rodney North, who drove me the short distance to New Auburn.

Just as we walked in the door of his home in mid-afternoon, his wife, Laverna, removed a beautiful blueberry pie from the oven—what a treat that was! I was to stay overnight with his mother, Kitty North. We were amused as she "scolded" her son for meeting the editor in a "pickup truck." She would be happy to know that I now own such a vehicle!

God has blessed the efforts of many people over the years to ensure the publication of the *Recorder*—a journal containing news of people, events, and churches as well as the "Good News" of Jesus Christ and His eternal kingdom. May God continue to bless the ministry of *The Sabbath Recorder*, and all those who make its publication possible. \mathcal{R}

Resolving conflict peacefully

by Douglas Clarke

David Satcher, new director of the Centers for Disease Control, has stated that he will be focusing the Centers' attentions on the risks to public health from the perpetrators of violent crime. Rather than seeing violence as simply a problem for the police and justice system, he considers it a symptom of societal illness.

As a real health risk for a growing number of U.S. citizens, this will be a critical agenda item for his organization. Satcher told an interviewer, "We plan to identify and communicate the major risk factors for things like homicide, whether they be firearms in the homes or just a free spread of firearms in the streets. We will also be helping young people to develop conflict resolution strategies."

Many people have become hardened to violence by the constant, repetitive reports in the media and the dramatizations in productions made for our entertainment. Sometimes the telling of historical events includes violent acts. They have always been a part of human life to some extent, but we cannot get used to pain, suffering, and death. We cannot adopt the mindset required of soldiers who go to war.

Violence is our concern. Whether or not we subscribe to complete pacifism, we have been commanded not to kill, and called to be participants in acting out God's mercy among the people of the earth—among individuals or between groups.

Conflict resolution is a method for helping people work toward new, constructive relationships. It establishes a setting in which each person's feelings can be heard without interruption. Then, each person

is asked to consider what they can do to make a "bad" situation better for everyone concerned.

This is accomplished by a mediator, who is trained to help people think creatively about how they can make their own situation better. They are guided to find ways to go about their lives while also taking others' needs and desires into account. The parties in conflict sit across a table from each other and work out ways in which they all can get what they need. They design "win-win" situations.

Conflict resolution arises out of—and is one of the best fulfillments of—Jesus' teaching and example. It is a process by which people who seem to be incompatible can find their own solutions to problems. They learn to live in, at least a workable semblance of, harmony.

Conflict resolution techniques have been used in such places as the negotiations between the warring nations in the Middle East and in the summit meetings between Los Angeles' gang leaders. This has been instrumental in people finding solutions to very difficult problems.

Some people recognize that it is not enough just to help adults who have learned violent ways to avoid hurting or killing each other. Some people, like David Satcher, have taken it upon themselves to reduce the violence in our society by helping children to learn better ways of living with their neighbors.

I know a man who has taken it upon himself to teach an entire generation of children how to resolve conflicts together. Don DeMott is a "retired" professor and certified mediator who, as a member of the New York Baptist Peace Fellowship, has developed and pro-

duced a conflict resolution curriculum for elementary school children.

Don is actively engaged in "planting this seed of peace" in schools in western New York, primarily Rochester. The curriculum was developed as a practical guide without explicit religious content, so it can be employed in school settings without violating the separation of church and state. It provides practical skills for reducing violence and building a culture of peacefulness.

Don trains volunteers, and then assists them in setting up the program in schools. They first work to obtain the cooperation and commitment of the school's administration. Then the volunteer works directly with educators in teaching the method to children.

Children who demonstrate ability and interest in mediating conflicts are chosen to be peer mediators, who can then be called upon by any students who find themselves in conflict. Peer mediators, because they are students (rather than "meddling adults"), have great success in helping to prevent blatant violence. They also reduce discipline problems by helping build working relationships among students of diverse background, ability, and aspirations.

Does this sound like something your school or community needs? Is this something you feel called to be a part of? Would you like to support those who do?

If you need more information about conflict resolution, or want to obtain a copy of the curriculum and find out how to set up such a program in your school(s), contact Douglas Clarke of the Committee on Christian Social Action at 2851 Hemlock Hill Road, Alfred Station, NY 14803, or call (607) 587-8358. **SR**



Women's Society page by Charlotte Chroniger

Still waiting for Messiah

"But we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block..."
(1 Corinthians 1:23 NASB).

When Jesus was born, the Jews of Palestine were divided into three major factions: Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. Each group had certain beliefs about worshipping God, holy living, and the coming Messiah.

These groups, particularly the Pharisees, enjoyed a powerful influence over the masses of common people. They were trusted as authorities over religious and secular matters.

Jesus threw the Jewish world into chaos when He challenged the teachings of the Pharisees and Sadducees. He introduced Israel to the love and salvation of God, as well as to His authority as God's Son. He showed the people that there was more to God's teach-

ings than what the Pharisees and Sadducees had taught them.

While a good number of Jews were able to accept Jesus as Savior and Messiah, many more rejected Jesus and His teachings. Their eyes were blinded to the truth.

Many of them are still waiting for Messiah to appear. Unless they come to accept Jesus as the Messiah who did come, they will be lost for eternity.

Fortunately, there are people and organizations who have a special ministry so that Jews can be introduced to the Messiah Jesus.

I became acquainted with one such group last year when "Jews for Jesus" sent an outreach family to a church in our area. This family shared about Christ in the Pass-

over. Their presentation revealed how they minister to Jews by showing how Jesus is very evident in the Passover, and how the Scriptures point to Jesus as the Promised One.

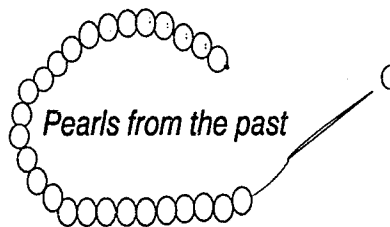
Because the family is Jewish, they are able to relate to the struggles many Jews have in accepting Jesus. Their commitment to Christ was very evident, as was their burden for the Jewish people. I was blessed by their presentation and grateful for the ministry they have to reach out to Jews who need the Lord.

If you would like to invite representatives of "Jews for Jesus" to share with your congregation about their ministry, contact them at 60 Haight Street, San Francisco, CA 94102-5895. Pray for the groups

that minister to the Jews. Pray for hearts to be softened to receive the Gospel of Christ. Ask God to help you be a testimony of His love and salvation to those around you who need the Lord. **SR**



They minister to Jews by showing how Jesus is very evident in the Passover, and how the Scriptures point to Jesus as the Promised One.



Pearls from the past

Lucky conversion

by Don A. Sanford, historian

The obituary page of *The Sabbath Recorder* for January 29, 1917, gave note of the death of Christian Theophilus Lucky in Berlin, Germany on November 25, 1916, at the age of 62. His passing marked the close of one phase of the Seventh Day Baptist mission to the Jews. That obituary said of him:

Mr. Lucky was a notable man. Bernstein, in his *Jewish Writings for Christ*, speaks of him as "a most remarkable convert to Christianity in the nineteenth century." A native of Tisminitz, in Galacia, he was early trained in all the wisdom of the Jewish people. Passing to the University of Berlin, he made researches in philosophy and religion, and was led to a confession of Christ.

Gerhard Velthuysen, the editor of a Dutch Seventh Day Baptist publication known as *De Boodschapper*, and a friend of Lucky, describes in more detail the circumstances of his acceptance of Christianity:

"His father intended for him to become a rabbi; but while pursuing his studies he became acquainted with the New Testament, and was struck by the pure Jewish character of the evangelist Matthew, and also felt himself attracted to the mysticism of John. His interest being thus awakened, he continued to search the New Testament, and came to believe in Jesus as the Messiah.

"Afterwards, he went to the United States. But he was grieved to find that all Christians expected the converted Jew to turn his back on his own

people and all the precious promises given them in the Holy Scriptures, to disregard God's law, and especially to leave God's Sabbath and the Laws of the fathers. It gave him, therefore, great joy when he discovered in the United States a denomination of non-Jews, who, along with the testimony of Jesus, also honored the Law of Jehovah.

"On October 1, 1886, he started work in New York City under the auspices of our Missionary Society. God blessed his testimony; a number of his people were converted, eight or more of these were baptized and joined the Seventh Day Baptist Church at New Market, N.J. [the Piscataway Church]. But even this work did not satisfy him. His aim was to organize churches made up of Hebrew members only, who would serve as lights and leaven among the Jews.

"Aided by the Missionary Society, he began the publication of a Hebrew paper entitled *Eduth le Israel* ("The Witness of Israel") mainly for the educated Jews. This publication was followed a little later by another in English called *The Peculiar People*."

Unfortunately, Christian Lucky's mission did not meet with the success hoped for. Even among some Seventh Day Baptists he was held with a measure of suspicion. Corliss Randolph reported that while Lucky was in seminary, he regularly attended the New York City Seventh Day Baptist Church and "made an early application for membership; but the former experience of the church with Jews professing Christianity had not been pleasant, and his application was

not acted upon favorably until 1885. He grew into confidence and respect of the church until his confidence was unqualifiedly complete and remained so until his death."

Dean Arthur E. Main, of the Alfred (N.Y.) University School of




Christian Theophilus Lucky

Theology, wrote that most of our leaders and people misunderstood Lucky in two particulars:

"1. Jews are full of prejudice against a Christian Jew who receives a salary from Gentiles.

"2. He greatly desired to follow the method of St. Paul, and not the methods of modern board-working among the Jews.

"Paul's method was simply to urge Jews to accept Jesus as Savior and Lord, and then allow them to observe honored customs, if they so desire, and would not observe them as essential to salvation, or press them upon others. Here too, our boards and people failed to rise to [Lucky's] level, which was both scriptural and rational."

Christian Lucky severed his direct connection with the Missionary Society about 1889 and spent much of his remaining years in Europe where he continued his Christian witness to the Jews. *The Peculiar People* continued until 1898 under the editorship of William C. Daland, one of Lucky's seminary classmates who later became president of Milton (Wis.) College. 



SR Almanac

Where we have been...

One year ago—April 1993

With his theme, "A Firm Foundation," Conference President James Skaggs looks at his daily topics for Conference.

Don Sanford follows the Conference theme as he speaks at the New England Yearly Meeting, regarding the Newport, R.I., meeting house and church.

John Conrod provides some "foundational thoughts" about God the Father.

Christian Education page gives tips on starting a youth fellowship.

Jamaican Conference plans their agricultural project for growing plantain and coffee.

Five years ago—April 1989

First issue presented by new editor Kevin Butler. Articles review the many changes in the *SR* and other publications.

Rev. Gordon Lawton discusses the changes and challenges with church facilities in Boulder, Colo.

A new column, "Pastor Profile," highlights Rev. Kenneth Burdick.

Board of Christian Education announces the first "Rex Edward Zwiebel Lecture on Christian Education" with speaker Dr. Wayne Rood.

Church news arrives from Westerly, R.I.; Alfred, N.Y.; and Shiloh, N.J.

Pastor Frits Nieuwstraten ordained in Haarlem, the Netherlands.

10 years ago—April 1984

"Beacon" material provided by the Nortonville, Kan., youth fellowship.

Rev. S. Kenneth Davis, and wife Jean, honored for 13 years of serving at Battle Creek, Mich.

Report received of January robbery and vandalism at the New York City church.

"Testimony of a Thief" presents fictional viewpoint of the believing thief on the cross, by Rev. Steven Crouch.

Missionary Rodney Henry called to ordination by his home church in Los Angeles.

Onnalee Saunders and Madge Sutton Van Horn recognized for 30 years of serving as Board of Christian Education directors.

25 years ago—April 1969

"Mission Notes" issue highlights SDB work in Malawi, Jamaica, and Guyana.

SDB World Federation Executive Committee makes plans for 1971 Federation sessions in Westerly.

After 40 years as pastor of the Mill Yard church in London, the Rev. James McGeachy retires.

Rev. Leland Davis accepts the call to the Los Angeles church. His son, Ronald, plans to be summer assistant pastor there.

"Conference Publicity" column answers the question: "What is a Seventh Day Baptist Conference?"

Paul Maxson meets with the American Bible Society; Alton Wheeler participates with the U.S. Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches; and Albert Rogers meets with the General Board of the National Council of Churches. (*Editor's note: We are no longer members of the latter two groups.*)

50 years ago—April 1944

Editor H.C. Van Horn shares about his taxing New Jersey-to-Florida bus trip.

Rev. Marion Van Horn accepts the pastorate at Lost Creek, W.Va.

The SDB Commission votes unanimously to hold General Conference meetings as scheduled in Alfred.

"Who's Who Among SDB Young People" entries include Emerald Stillman and Alma Bond.

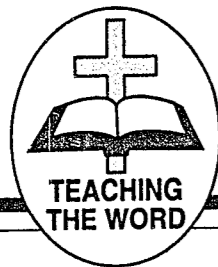
An Easter sunrise service prayer, offered by General George C. Marshall, printed on the April 24 cover.

Rev. Luther Crichlow completes his army chaplaincy training.

...where are we headed?

Pray—

- for this year's Conference preparations
- for rejuvenation of our youth fellowships
- for recent and upcoming ordinations
- that our resurrection observances inspire new work for His kingdom
- that we truly thank our long-time servants
- for God's protection over life and property
- for our ecumenical ties with other Baptists



Christian Education

by Ernest K. Bee Jr.

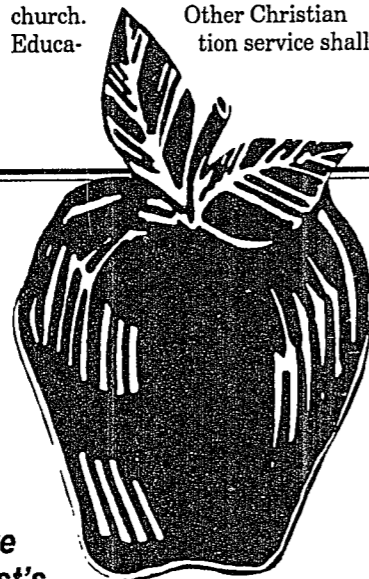
Sabbath School Teacher of the Year

The Sabbath School Committee of the Board of Christian Education invites each Seventh Day Baptist church to nominate one Sabbath School teacher for the 1994 "Crystal Apple Award."

The Board is seeking nominees whose outstanding teaching skills have contributed to the Christian conversion and nurture of our people. We understand that not

"The Sabbath School Teacher of the Year shall exhibit the qualities of faith and teaching found in the life and teachings of Christ; serve as a Sabbath School teacher; and be a member of the nominating church. Other Christian Education service shall

We understand that not everyone worthy of recognition will be identified and honored. Nevertheless, we wish to honor one teacher on behalf of all our Sabbath School teachers who have made Christ's teachings a living reality for Seventh Day Baptists.



made Christ's teachings a living reality for Seventh Day Baptists.

everyone worthy of recognition will be identified and honored. Nevertheless, we wish to honor one such teacher on behalf of all our Sabbath School teachers who have made Christ's teachings a living reality for Seventh Day Baptists.

The 1994 Teacher of the Year will be selected from the nominees using the criteria on the official nomination form.

contribute to a fuller appreciation of the nominee's Christian service."

Nomination forms were mailed to pastors and superintendents in early March. The postmark deadline is June 1, 1994. If you failed to receive a form, or wish further information, please contact the Board of Christian Education, P.O. Box 115, Alfred Station, NY 14803, or telephone (607) 587-8527. *SR*

Crystal Apple Recipients

- George Parrish
Battle Creek, Mich.
1986
- Shirley Cargill
North Loup, Neb.
1987
- Margaret Allen
Lost Creek, W.Va.
1988
- Helen Bond
Columbus, Ohio
1989
- June Johnson
Nortonville, Kan.
1990
- Ruth Bennett
Battle Creek, Mich.
1991
- Dan Richards
Texarkana, Ark.
1992
- Dr. Lewis H.V. May
Riverside, Calif.
1993



FOCUS on Missions

Teaching missions to our young people

by Kirk Looper

It is interesting how young children mimic the older people around them. Children usually try their best to find someone to follow and imitate.

Education is picked up more readily when children see their parents reading and studying. Proper table manners are developed when good examples are set. Positive attitudes toward church are promoted through the interaction of children with their elders. Even the attitude towards missions is directly connected to the attitudes adults exhibit.

When we discuss missions, we should be teaching our youth a correct missions attitude. Sometimes we discuss the money set aside for missions, or define missions, or deal with the time factor of missions. In other instances, we may deal with missions in terms of physical and emotional costs.

Whatever is said about missions, or the reason for saying it, you can be sure that the "small ears" around you will be listening and forming opinions. Even by saying nothing, we are teaching attitudes.

Can we help missions by discussing those that are in place? Is this something we can share with our youth while eating, driving, or even discussing Sabbath School lessons? We can promote a more positive attitude toward mission work by joining the Missionary Society, and by allowing missions bulletins and materials to be read aloud to our young people in church.

Presently, Summer Christian Service Corps (SCSC) provides our youth with their biggest opportunity for mission work. Maybe that will eventually change. Could your church provide mission work for our young people through dedicated service? Could Conference?

Situations will need to change before such work can be effective. Higher levels of education and maturity will need to be reached. However, we cannot afford to ignore the basic fact that we will need future leaders in order to grow. What are we doing to form correct attitudes about missions among our youth?

Guyana

On February 13, 1994, Val Bennett fulfilled a lifelong dream by leaving for Guyana, South America. During the next two years, he will be serving the Lord as a volunteer dedicated worker in



Val Bennett

the mission fields and churches of Guyana. This courageous step of faith is the result of a promise he made to God many years ago.

Val left Jamaica, promising God that if he made it to America and became successful, he would donate two years of his life to a mission field. He moved to the United States, completed his education, and got a job. Most recently, he worked for the city of Philadelphia in the engineering department. He has many skills that will help him in his work in Guyana.

I believe we will be hearing more from Val in the future. Meanwhile, let us pray for his work in God's kingdom. He will be working by faith and will need understanding supporters. If you would like to help him, contributions can be

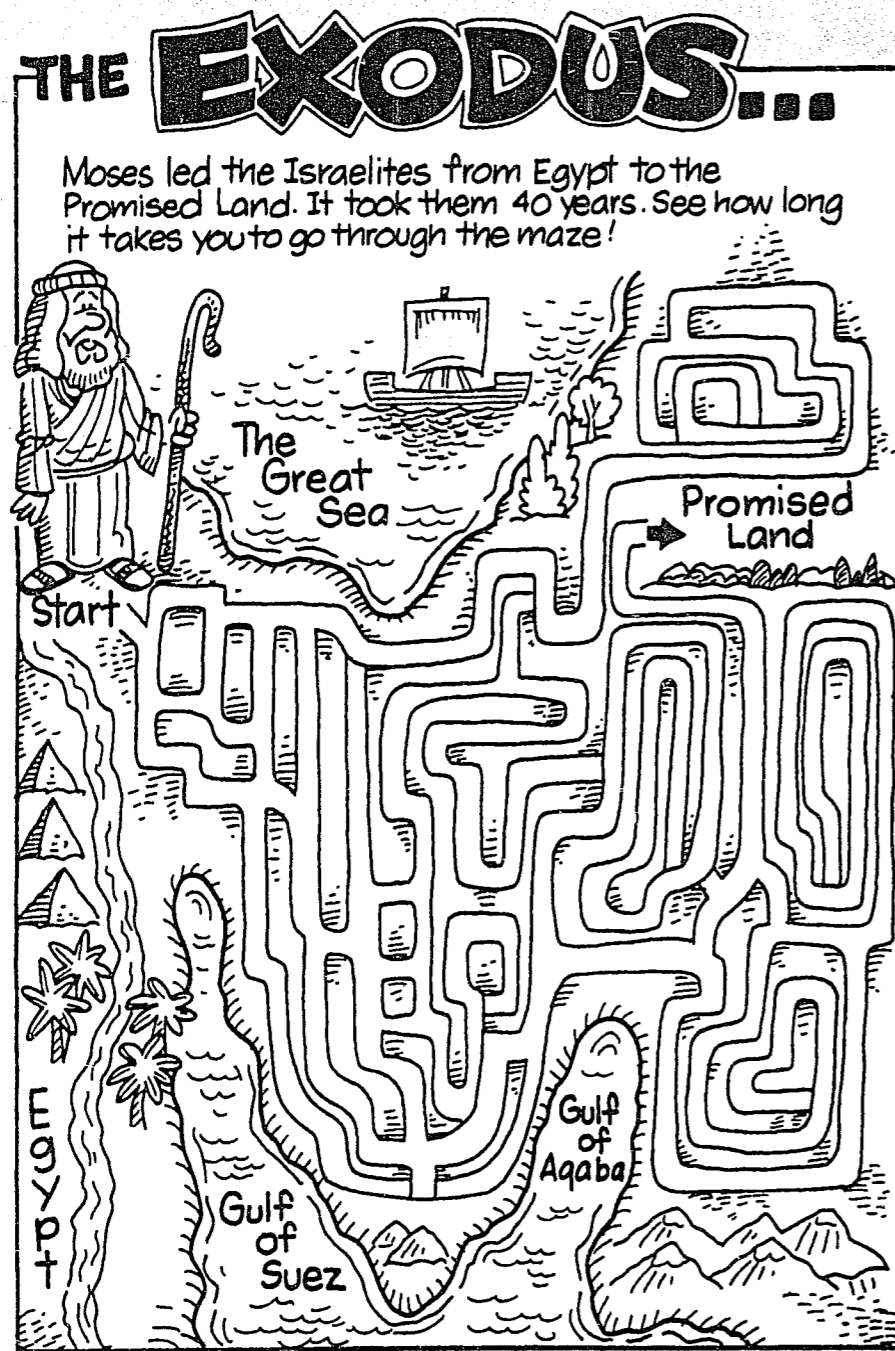
made through the Hope Seventh Day Baptist Church, Pastor Kenroy Cruickshank, 118 Logan St., North Hills, PA 19038. Phone: (215) 884-7330.

Argentina SDB Fellowship

The Melbourne, Australia, church is thankful to the Almighty Lord for opening a new SDB group in Argentina. The congregation feels privileged for being an instrument in the Lord's hands as they helped their brethren secure their own place of worship. However, they are also committed to providing the Argentinians with some financial assistance to help alleviate their burden.

This information came from *The Link*, the Australasia Conference's newsletter. We are praying for continued help and guidance for the new church group. Pastor Jose Alegre was instrumental in the birth of this new group and is assisting in the process of getting information out and financial aid in. This step is crucial in spreading the Gospel of Christ and the work of SDBs in South America. If you wish to help, they would appreciate your prayers, and anything you can donate.

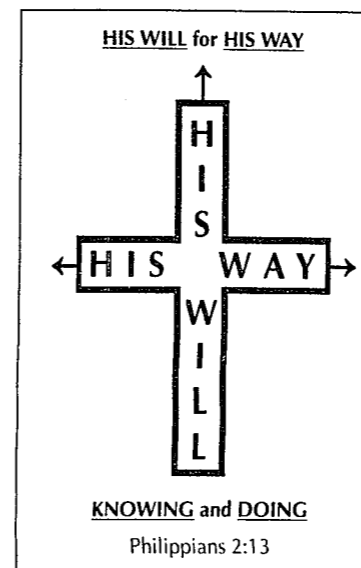
Please continue to pray for the church in The Gambia, as well as for those in Nigeria. Our position there is very shaky, and the future is uncertain. It is not a "comfortable" situation. Pray also for the Indonesian Conference and their work among the Moslems and other unreached peoples. The India Orphanage update in *Lead-Line* is available at your church. We need to continue to pray for those in India as they minister to those around them. *SR*



Source: *Fun Stuff for Kids ages 4-6*
by Michael Streff
(ZondervanPublishingHouse, 1992).
Available at local bookstores or by calling 1-800-727-3480.

Books point to His will

by Leon Lawton



Two recently reprinted books focus on our Conference theme this year and offer excellent understanding from the Word of God.

Knowing God's Will: Finding Guidance for Personal Decisions, by M. Blaine Smith has been

Press, 2nd Ed., 1991, 248 pages.)

This book gets to the heart of our questions and gives practical, biblical answers to these matters:

- Is God's will likely to be the thing I want least to do?
- How can I find personal guidance in the Bible?

God's will can be known and applied in your life. That's the good news for Christians in the '90s.

newly revised and expanded. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity

- Am I expected to think through God's will?
- Or, will He impress it on me in a supernatural way? ...and many others.

What is the focus of General Conference?

PARTICIPATION!

General Conference is a family and Christian experience. The key is participation! Whatever the age, there is a place for you. It is not a time of receiving, basically, but giving. And as we give, then we receive rich blessings.

It is time to make your plans to attend this year in Lindsborg, Kansas, August 7-13. From the acrostic, you can "see" the varied parts of every day's experience.

The *May Recorder* will give further information and registration forms. I look forward to seeing you there.

P RAYER

A CTION: Decision by Delegates

R EPORTS: Boards and Agencies

T ESTIMONIES

I NTEREST COMMITTEES

C OMMUNION

I NSPIRATION IN MUSIC

P REACHING OF THE WORD

A LL! Children, Youth

T EACHING/BIBLE STUDY

I NFORMATION: Workshops

O UR WORSHIP

N EW FRIENDS/FELLOWSHIP

Every Life Is A Plan Of God: Discovering His Will For Your Life, by J. Oswald Sanders (Grand Rapids, MI: Discovery House, Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, 1992, 157 pages.)

God's will can be known and applied in your life. That's the good news for Christians in the '90s. And nothing could be more important today. This book shares the principles of understanding the will of God for your life.

Sanders contends "that the ultimate key to the search for God's will is knowing God Himself. Out of such intimacy comes the ability to discern the will of God in every circumstance. Believers who seek and find His will can live with confidence and joy."

Chapter headings include: The Nature of God's Guidance; Contributory Elements in Guidance; Dreams, Visions, and Impressions; The Hour of Decision; Walking in Wisdom. *SR*

Pastor appreciated in Miami

by Thelma Stevens

Sabbath, July 17, 1993, was a memorable day for the Miami, Fla., SDB Church. We honored Pastor Andrew Samuels, who has served the church since June 1988, with an Appreciation Service.

From beginning to end, the service—all three hours of it—was one to remember. It was riveting. It was compelling. It was inspiring. And, most importantly, it was God-glorifying.

Teslyn Takacs spearheaded the church's monumental effort to show its appreciation to our beloved pastor of five years. And what a commendable job she did of coordinating the day!

Tributes to our pastor were done by Erica Henry, one of our newest transfer church members and a contemporary of our pastor. She spoke of her friendship with Pastor Andy since childhood, and of his consistency in character and love for the Lord's work throughout the years. Other tributes came from Pastor Dale Powell, a local Missionary Baptist pastor and friend of Andrew; Pastor Rupert Loyd, another

friend and pastor of the Central Alliance Church where we presently worship; and Pastor Andy's dad, Benjamin.

Kay, as the strong, supportive wife of our pastor, was also recognized for her contribution to the life and ministry of the church. Heather King paid tribute to her.

The musical aspect of the celebration was powerful and varied. Special music came from the Miami 7th Day Church of God Youth Choir, Ronnie Arneaud, Central Alliance Church, Thelma Stevens, Lee Fletcher, and Shevaughn Loney. Our guest speaker for the august occasion was Pastor Joe Samuels, Pastor Andy's uncle and mentor, and pastor of the Plainfield, N.J., SDB Church. He powerfully delivered a landmark sermon on "The Profile of a Preacher." Pastor Joe was introduced by Naval Harley, former pastor of Pastor Andy's home church in Jamaica, and the one who baptized our honoree when he was a mere 11-year-old.

The service had a surprising culmination when Pastor Andy, in his remarks of gratitude, announced that he and Kay were married on July 17, 1983, exactly 10 years earlier. In celebration of their 10th wedding anniversary, they would renew their vows to each other. Right then and there, Pastor Joe officiated in the brief but touching ceremony.

A delicious dinner in the church's Fel-

lowship Hall followed the service. Our pastor and his wife, as well as their daughters, Tsahai and Tsafiq, received several gifts as tokens of appreciation. For their dedication, dynamism, humility, and service to the work of God's kingdom, they deserve them all. May the Lord continue to bless and prosper their ministry here with us at the Miami SDB Church. *SR*

Appreciating their appreciation

In our tradition, all of the Pastor's Appreciation Services I recall attending or hearing about, the honoree was usually lying in a box, having been carried to the service in a limousine. But for me, I was sitting on the front pew instead of lying in front, and I had driven myself to the church.

Why were things different for me?

The thing that caused the gracious people in my church to immerse themselves in such an elaborate effort on my behalf had nothing to do with me. It had everything to do with *them*. You see, they decided to show their appreciation while I am still breathing simply because they are courageous people. They are not afraid to be pioneers, to be frontier people, to set the pace, to defy tradition.

I consider myself blessed to share the ministry with them. I deeply appreciate their appreciation.

—Andrew Samuels



Andrew and Kay Samuels are pictured with their two daughters, Tsahai and Tsafiq.

Marlboro adds to diaconate

by Diane Cruzan

The Marlboro, N.J., SDB Church is pleased to announce the addition of two new members to its diaconate. Discussions concerning this possibility began about a year ago. After much prayer and study by the congregation, two of our members accepted the call: Dan Cruzan and Sharon Davis.

Sharon, a teacher of handicapped children, has attended the Marlboro church all her life. She has taught primary Sabbath School since she was a high school student, and has also served as superintendent for many years. She is moderator of the church, and an active member of several church committees and activities. Sharon is an enthusiastic "idea person," and we at Marlboro feel privileged to have her as a member of our diaconate.

Dan, owner and operator of a plant nursery, has also attended the Marlboro church all his life. He has a good understanding of the Bible and has used his talents in serving the church as teacher for the adult Sabbath School, trustee, youth group leader, and organizer of different projects through the years. His leadership qualities will surely be put to good use in the diaconate.

The Rev. Earl Cruzan, uncle to Dan and also to Sharon (through Earl's wife, Mabel), was to bring the message for the ordination service. However, icy road conditions at our end of their trip would have made it impossible for the Cruzans to get from the airport to the church. They received the news just in time for them to retrieve their luggage from the plane and return home.

It was a disappointment to us all not to visit with the Cruzans again, but through the modern technology of a fax machine, we were able to "hear" Pastor Cruzan's message.

Many others were also unable to attend the service because of the weather. But for those who could come, it was a day of celebration and fellowship that will long be remembered.

Between Sabbath School classes and the afternoon ordination service, we enjoyed a wonderful dinner with time to just sit and visit old friends and new. Soon the prelude

ties a deacon should have, but reminded us that we should all strive for those same qualities. The charge to the ordinands was given by Deacon Fred Ayars. Pointing out that Jesus performed tasks from the most mundane to those of leadership, Fred suggested that Dan and Sharon look to Jesus as their example of how to live a life of service.

**We thank the Lord that
Sharon and Dan
have the qualities needed
as leaders of the church
and for their willingness to serve.**

could be heard in the sanctuary—our "key" to move upstairs. Two sisters, Cindy Dickinson at the piano and Lora Dickinson at the organ, proved their talent once again. The choir, at Dan's request, sang Bach's "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring," accompanied on the piano by Diane Cruzan. "Jesus, Lord to Me" by Greg Nelson and Gary McSpadden, was sung by Jeanne Dickinson at Sharon's request.

The "faxed" sermon was read by the Rev. Melvin Stephan, pastor of the Marlboro church. Pastor Cruzan urged the congregation to go beyond the essential steps of Christianity and be mature in our relationship with Jesus. He discussed some of the traits of a good church leader: using the gifts God has given; having a servant personality (not servile, but servant); possessing qualities of leadership and a willingness to use them.

Following the message, Deacon James Davis gave the charge to the church. James explained that the Scripture reading (1 Tim. 3:8-13 and Heb. 10:19-25) lists the quali-

After prayer, the ordinands presented their statements. Dan expressed his belief that Jesus, as son of God, paid the penalty for him and that he is forgiven. He also stated his willingness to serve God and the people of the Marlboro Church who have loved him and cared for him all his life.

Sharon felt honored that she was found worthy to be chosen as a deaconess. She expressed her hope that her life would continue to reflect these qualities, for she is assured she can do all things through Christ, her Lord and Savior.

After the laying on of hands by all diaconate members and ministers present, and a heartfelt prayer led by Pastor Mel, Deacon Frank Cruzan gave the welcome to the new diaconate members, Sharon Davis and Dan Cruzan. A loving reception in the church social room followed the service. We thank the Lord that Sharon and Dan have the qualities needed as leaders of the church and for their willingness to serve. *SR*

Dear Sir:

I would like to express an opinion regarding the article, "What version is your child reading?" (November 1993 SR).

Let's examine the verses in the International Children's Bible (ICB) which Mr. Willimon finds offensive. John 11:53 in the King James Version states, "Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death." The word "they" refers back to the chief priests and Pharisees mentioned in verse 47. The chief priests and Pharisees were the Jewish leaders. So when the ICB states, "That day the Jewish leaders started planning to kill Jesus," it is exactly correct.

Mr. Willimon further takes issue with the ICB Version of John 19:15. According to the word of God, the Jews did say, "Away with him," because the "they" in verse 15 refers back to "the Jews" in verse 14.

Regarding Acts 9:23-25, Mr. Willimon attacks the ICB for subheading those verses, "Saul escapes the Jews." I would like to hear Mr. Willimon's explanation of who he thinks Saul escaped from, if not the Jews.

I could go on and on. How many times in the New Testament do we find the statement, "for fear of the Jews." How many times in the book of Acts do we find Christians being persecuted by Jews? Not vice versa.

I felt that Mr. Willimon's article was so inaccurate that I should respond to it. I would characterize it as a fable of the sort mentioned by the Apostle Paul in Titus 1:14. *The Sabbath Recorder* usually has very good articles. I was disappointed to find the one discussed above.

Best Regards,
Ralph Griffin
Millerstown, PA

Dear editor,

You do well in the February 1994, issue, presenting both sides of the "Once-Saved, Always-Saved" proposition. I urge you to publish similar response to the Trinity doctrine that was very thoroughly supported a few issues back. Fair is fair.

For my money, Arminians and Calvinists overlap a great deal, differing largely because of vocabulary.

Jesus was not speaking casually when He declared, "... I will in no wise cast out!" The Father saves any sinner who wants to be saved. (That's "choosing.")

The Holy Spirit brings conviction of sin and woos the sinner. The sinner is indifferent (helpless) until the Voice of God reaches out. (That's "chosen.")

Who's ahead in that debate? Well, I say God is; hallelujah!

Ira Bond
Eldorado Springs, MO

Dear Kevin:

While the debate over eternal salvation and the Arminian position that one can lose their salvation (Timothy Bond's article "Eternal Salvation for Christians: A Debate in Play Form," Feb. '94 SR) was humorous, the cast of characters depicted both views in such a bad light that I would not want to be a party to either side. The Bible presents a more balanced approach that those who are truly saved will persevere in faith, holiness, obedience, and love.

Mr. Perseverance,
Dennis L. Palmer
Lake Elsinore, CA

Dear Kevin,

The theme of the February *Sabbath Recorder* was of great interest to me, but I was somewhat disappointed with the article by Tim Bond. I thought

it fell far short of properly defending Mr. Always' position. Both Ken Chroniger and Matt Olson had good points and offered food for thought. I happen to embrace the doctrine of eternal security, so I would share Matt's view.

Congratulations on another fine issue, and the debate format again was excellent.

Yours for His kingdom,
Andrew Samuels
Miami, FL

Dear Kevin,

I'm writing in response to the February articles on "salvation." Recognizing that SDBs take as foundational the principle "liberty of thought," I appreciate your desire to honor that part of our heritage with the debate-style format. Part of its effectiveness is dependent upon the authors' mutual kindness and respect, which was evident in Pastors Chroniger and Olson.

I hope the SR will become a forum for SDBs to speak to other issues of concern, and will solicit a broader spectrum of beliefs and values to be shared. Each of the three contributors in the February SR would consider themselves "conservative" and "evangelical" Christians. And each one approaches Scripture as the lens through which they read/understand the world. It does seem likely that many SDBs would share the same labels, but by no means would they appropriately define all of us. They do not define me, or a significant percentage of my SDB friends. Yet, we too are striving to understand and follow the Will of God, the Way of Jesus, and the Sabbath... and we would like to be heard and respected as brothers and sisters.

For instance, I have come to embrace a more "this worldly" view of salvation, or of saving/being saved. The focus on

salvation as a future, post-death fulfillment of our communion with God is negligent of the more immediate and at least equally biblical view that salvation is a present experience and/or action. Expressions of "God is salvation" are found throughout the Bible. I would argue that they represent the dominant biblical view, and therefore the contemporary emphasis on an exclusively future, spiritual salvation is not consistent with either the prophets or Jesus.

Earlier I said each of the three presenters use Scripture to understand the world, and implied that I don't. As a second "for instance," I will clarify. In a nutshell, the world is the lens through which I read Scripture, the reverse of the presenters' approach.

I come to Scripture informed by a prior understanding of

what is, and is not, true. These are my lenses, courtesy of my family heritage, the traditions and teachings of my church, and various learnings from other people, cultures, and the world of nature. At times, Scripture opposes what I have come to know as true, or good, or sensible. My response, overly simplified, is that the Scripture isn't right at that point, and that's okay.

I have eyes in order that I can see. I have ears in order to hear. I have a mind so that I can reason, comprehend, and act in ways that are good and holy. The world is a revelation of its Creator, a Word of God. It is no less inspired (and in some ways maybe it is more inspired) than our Scriptures which are frequently described as the Word of God. I can do no less than weigh all the words of God, and be faithful to what I come

to know.

With further opportunities for open, respectful, honest dialogue, I am certain we will better understand one another.

Sincerely,
Leon Wheeler
Alfred, NY

Editor's note: Please allow me to share our current statement of belief on the Bible, which reflects the views of most SDBs—

"We believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and is our final authority in matters of faith and practice. We believe that Jesus Christ, in His life and teachings as recorded in the Bible, is the supreme interpreter of God's will for mankind."

(2 Peter 1:20-21; Romans 3:2; 2 Peter 3:1-2, 15-16; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; Matthew 5:17-19; Psalm 119:105; John 20:30-31; Hebrews 1:1-2.)

New Zealand pastor honored

by Ian Ingoe, Australasian Conference President

On December 18, 1993, a special event took place at the small church on Livingstone Street in Christchurch, New Zealand. As Conference President, I had been asked to present Pastor Edward Barrar with a letter of thanks from the Australasian Conference. I was able to perform this official duty while staying with Pastor Daniel Barrar, Edward's son.

Pastor Edward is now 91 years old and still preaches. He is also studying the book of Isaiah from a Dead Sea Scroll microfilm he has on loan. He started keeping the Sabbath even before there was a Seventh-day Adventist church in Christchurch, and has been preaching in that city since 1942. During that time, he has also edited and printed the *Gospel Messenger*.


One of Edward's two sons, Ro-

Pastor Edward Barrar (on the right) receives a thank-you letter from Pastor Ian Ingoe, on behalf of the Australasian Conference.




nald, has served as a missionary in Malawi, Africa. Pastor Edward was able to lend support during the hard times of those early years. Since then, he has continued to help his missionary son, who is currently teaching at Makapwa. His other son, Daniel, has been a faithful servant to the group in Christchurch.

The elder Barrar shuns the easy life and lives very simply so that he can give more to the Lord's work. Although he can preach with "great volume," he seems gentle and caring when speaking to individuals on a one-to-one basis.

Pastor Edward is a man who has served his Savior well. Yet when presented with the letter of thanks from the Conference, he stated that *Christ* is the one who should be glorified, not himself. 

December	\$785,904
November	\$720,412
October	\$654,920
September	\$589,428
August	\$523,936
July	\$458,444
June	\$392,952
May	\$327,460
April	\$261,968
March	\$196,476
February	\$130,984
January	\$65,492

MONTHLY GOAL 

February Giving
Investment Income (est)
January Giving
Investment Income (est)

1994 income needed—\$785,904.
Per month gift income needed—\$28,372.
Total needed each month—\$65,492

Statement of editorial policy for *The Sabbath Recorder*

Revised by The Sabbath Recorder
Committee and approved by
the Tract and Communication Council
November 7, 1993

(Old policy in parentheses.)

• *The Sabbath Recorder* will always attempt to present the views of Seventh Day Baptists, as guided by our Statement of Belief. (The Sabbath Recorder will always attempt to present the majority point of view among Seventh Day Baptists, guided by the actions of the General Conference. Any sizeable minority point of view of Seventh Day Baptists shall be presented with due regard to space limitations and balance of material.)

• Presentation of one's own beliefs can be, and in the columns of *The Sabbath Recorder* should be, unaccompanied by attack upon the beliefs of those who have arrived at different conclusions. Articles containing attacks upon the beliefs or points of view of others shall not be accepted until the offending words, sentences, or paragraphs are deleted or rewritten to meet the requirements of this policy. The Editor may consult the Sabbath Recorder Committee.

(Positive statements of the beliefs of minority groups will be accepted under the condition of policy #2. When the editor is confronted with difficult decisions regarding publication of minority viewpoints and attacks on the beliefs of others, the editor may consult The Sabbath Recorder Committee.)

• Long and elaborately involved articles cannot be accepted.

• Materials addressed primarily to ministers or other specialized groups shall be avoided.

• No payment is authorized for submitted articles published. (No payment is authorized for contributions.)

• Selection of articles to go in any issue of *The Sabbath Recorder* must be made for reasonable balance of material presented.

• The content of any issue shall be the sole responsibility of the Editor.

• Should a question be raised by the author or other responsible person regarding the rejection of an article by the Editor, the Sabbath Recorder Committee may be consulted.

• Advertising that is not in accordance with the Purpose Statement of *The Sabbath Recorder* will not be published.

Obituaries

Langworthy.—Fredrick C. "Chris" Langworthy Sr., 90, of Adams, N.Y., died on December 5, 1993, at his home after a short illness.

He was born on October 22, 1903, in Brookfield, N.Y., the son of Fredrick C. and Edwina (Holmes) Langworthy. He graduated from Brookfield High School and attended automotive mechanic school in Detroit, Mich. On June 20, 1927, he married Frances Waters at the Seventh Day Baptist Church.

The couple lived in Brookfield for six months before returning to the Adams Center, N.Y., area. In 1932, they moved to Green Settlement Road, where they operated a dairy farm. In 1939, they moved to North Harbor Road. Chris was employed at the New York Air Brake Co., Watertown, N.Y., from 1940 until 1952.

In 1950, they moved to Swan Road, where Chris operated a small dairy farm and maintained a large vegetable garden, selling vegetables and popcorn at a roadside stand. When their home was destroyed by fire in 1991, they went to live with their son, Fredrick. Frances died there on March 30, 1992. Chris' home on Swan Road was eventually rebuilt by his son and grandson, and he moved back there in October of 1992.

He was a member of the SDB Church, where he was a deacon and treasurer for more than 50 years. He was also a member of the Adams Center Grange and the Rodman Masonic Lodge.

Survivors include one son, Fredrick C. Langworthy Jr. of Adams; 11 grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild.

Funeral services were held on December 8, 1993, in the Adams Center SDB Church, with the Rev. Gene Smith officiating. Burial was in Rural Cemetery.

Ashcraft.—Merle Trevier Ashcraft, 88, passed away at his home on December 26, 1993.

He was born in Rogersville, Mo., on January 26, 1905, and moved to Pasadena, Calif., in 1924. He was married to Blanche Owen. In 1944, he joined the Los Angeles, Calif., Seventh Day Baptist Church, and was an active member the remainder of his life.

Merle was a Pasadena business man for 54 years as the owner of Ashcraft Sheet Metal Co., and member of the Altadena, Calif., Kiwanis Club for 33 years. He bowled for the Kiwanis bowling league until he was 86.

Merle never missed an opportunity to witness for Jesus Christ. His example lives on in the hearts and minds of those who knew him. "Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith" (Hebrews 13:7).

Survivors include his wife of 67 years, Blanche; three sons, Keith, Dick, and Larry; three daughters, Doris, Betty, and Carol; 28 grandchildren, 45 great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandson.

Funeral services were held on January 3, 1994, at Forest Lawn, Glendale, Calif.

Bowman.—Thomas Lanier Bowman, 64, of Bunceton, Mo., died on January 16, 1994, at Boone Hospital Center in Columbia, Mo.

He was born on January 19, 1929, in Goodway, Ala., the son of Charles W. and Lenora (Phillips) Bowman. He married Elsie Divis on August 3, 1971, in Lincoln, Neb.

Thomas, who was a veteran of the Korean War, had lived in Bunceton since 1989. He was a 32nd Degree Mason, a member of the Scottish Rite and Shrine Club,

and a member of the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Elston, Mo.

Survivors include his wife, Elsie; one son, Thomas, of Texas; two daughters, Sandy Hamm of Aurora, Colo., and Michelle Bauman of Jonesboro, Ga.; four stepdaughters, Jacki Bridges of Mt. View, Mo., Kathy Barrow of Minden, Neb., and Linda Norton and Bobby Chollar, both of Hildreth, Neb.; one brother, Marshall, of Atmore, Ala.; six sisters, Mildred Padgett of Spanish Fort, Ala., Glory James of Monroeville, Ala., Frances Hardin of Eight Mile, Ala., Pauline Ikner of Pensacola, Fla., and Thelma Ward and Elaine Wiggins, both of Atmore; four grandchildren, six stepgrandchildren, and two step-great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by one brother.

Funeral services were held on January 19, 1994, at the William Wood Funeral Home in Boonville, Mo., with the Rev. Jon F. Warren officiating. Burial was held on January 20, 1994, at Schuyler (Neb.) Cemetery.

Ellerman.—Mary Ellerman, 90, died on January 21, 1994, at Atchison (Kan.) Senior Village after suffering a stroke.

She was born on June 26, 1903, on a farm near Nortonville, Kan., the daughter of William and Ellen (Stillman) Vincent. She attended school in Nortonville, Milton (Wis.) College, Emporia (Kan.) Teachers College, and Mount St. Scholastica College.

On August 16, 1933, she married Miles Ellerman. He died on November 24, 1981.

Mary was a teacher for more than 27 years. She taught in several Kansas communities, including Bennington, Nortonville, Winchester, and Clingan, and was loved and respected. She was a member of the Nortonville Seventh

Day Baptist Church, Missionary Society, Retired Teachers Association, and Order of the Eastern Star.

Survivors include two sons, William and Donald; six grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, and four stepgreat-grandchildren. In addition to her husband, Miles, she was preceded in death by two brothers, Bill and Stillman Vincent, and by one sister, Esther Vincent.

Funeral services were held at the O'Trimble Funeral Home in Nortonville, with Chaplain Clifford Bond, a former pupil, officiating. Burial was in the Nortonville Cemetery.

Accessions

Daytona Beach, FL

John Camenga, pastor
Joined after baptism
Samuel Spearl

Miami, FL

Andrew Samuels, pastor
Joined after testimony
Huethen Livingston

Births

Hill.—A son, Justin Spencer Hill, was born to Sidney and Amy Hill of Edgewater, FL, on January 28, 1994.

Marriages

Rivera - Fatato.—Luis Rivera and Jessica Fatato were united in marriage on February 14, 1994, at the Battle Creek, MI, Seventh Day Baptist Church. The Rev. James Galanaugh officiated.

Belland.—Charlotte M. Belland, 85, died on February 2, 1994, at Mercy Hospital, Janesville, Wis. She was born on February 7, 1908, in Walworth (Wis.) Township, the daughter of Robert N. and Harriet A. (Clarke) Belland. She graduated from Walworth High School and attended Whitewater (Wis.) Teachers College.

Charlotte was a cashier at Walworth State Bank for many years and worked at Lake Lawn Lodge after her retirement. She was a Worthy Matron of Walworth Chapter of Order of Eastern Star, and a member of RSVP. She was also a lifelong member of the Walworth Seventh Day Baptist Church. She joined the Albion, Wis., SDB Church when the Walworth church closed.

Survivors include one sister, Harriet Hill of Janesville; one brother, George, of Walworth; and nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by three brothers: Robert, Fred, and Byron.

Funeral services were held on February 5, 1994, at Toynton's Walworth Funeral Home, with the Rev. Donald McPeck officiating. Burial was in Walworth Cemetery.

Parrott.—Dorothy J. Parrott, 81, of Battle Creek, Mich., died on February 2, 1994, in Battle Creek Health System/Leila Site after being stricken at home three days earlier.

She was born on January 4, 1913, in North Loup, Neb., the daughter of Ross and Bertha Davis. She graduated from Lakeview High School, Battle Creek, and from Michigan State University.

Dorothy and her husband, Charles W. Parrott, were engaged in dairy farming in Battle Creek before moving to Williamston, where they also had a large dairy farm. Both were members of the Dairy Herd Improvement Association. Dorothy taught adult education classes in the Lansing, Mich.,

School District during the 1960s.

She served as president of the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference in 1982; was on the Seventh Day Baptist General Council; spearheaded nursing home ministry; and was a member of the MORE 2000 Leadership and National Field Development teams. She also was coordinator for "Decision to Disciple," and chaired the



Dorothy J. Parrott

Christian Social Action Committee, both locally and nationally.

Dorothy was a recipient of the SDB Women's Board Robe of Achievement in 1983. She was a lay minister in the Battle Creek SDB Church, where she also served as deaconess, moderator, and Sabbath School Superintendent and teacher. She enjoyed bowling, reading, and traveling.

Survivors include one son, Charles, of Hudsonville, Mich.; three daughters, Jeanette A. Noel of Battle Creek, Barbara J. Ellis of Portlandville, N.Y., and Margaret M. Methrell of Salem, W.Va.; three brothers, Roger Davis of Bradenton, Fla., Dale Davis of Battle Creek, and Laddie Davis of Pittsburgh, Pa.; one sister, Shirley Mann of Augusta, Mich.; 10 grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held on February 5, 1994, at the Battle Creek SDB Church, with the Rev. James F. Galanaugh officiating. Dorothy donated her body to science at the University of Michigan.

KEVIN'S CORNER

"I don't know any Jews!"

Was that your first reaction to this month's cover?

That response may be true for most SDBs, especially in our rural churches. So perhaps we can look at the overall topic of reaching out to those who might be—in our minds, at least—different.

I've become acquainted with an older gentleman who lives in a large farm house in the country. No big deal, you say? Well, it is when you realize that it's the same house where he was born 88 years ago!

Just last fall, Harold had quite an experience. While on a shopping trip at a

city mall, he got to talking with another senior citizen sitting on the same bench. It turned out that the other man was a minister, and they had an enjoyable conversation. As the wives returned and the men parted company, they shook hands.

It was the first time in Harold's life that he had shaken a black man's hand.

So many of us are culturally or geographically removed from "other" people. I tend to forget that fact, after the rich experience of having black, Mexican, Korean, African, and even charismatic hillbilly neighbors at seminary.

We tend to erect certain boundaries around ourselves, don't we? William L. Coleman, in his book *The Pharisees Guide to Total Holiness*, discusses this discriminating concept:

"The Pharisees were desperately determined to not break the laws of God. Consequently they devised a system to keep them from even coming close to angering God. They contrived a 'fence' of Pharisaic rules that, if man would keep them, would guarantee a safe distance between himself and the laws of God...

"The 'fence' or 'hedge' laws accumulated into hundreds over the years and were passed around orally. Soon it became apparent that they were far from optional. These laws became every inch as important as the scriptural laws and, in some instances, far more crucial."

While pastoring in Madison, Wis., I paid a visit to some new contacts who were interested in Sabbath-keeping and Seventh Day Baptists. I brought along our recently-released video, "Called Together," but soon discovered they did not own a video player. Nor a television. Which got us into a discussion about the media. Which led to talking about worldly dress and appearance. Which got us into holiday observances and Sabbath. Which led me to want to ask, "Would you like me to move directly under that pole lamp for further interrogation?"

They were not impressed with our freedoms. They preferred their own "fences." And in my opinion, they were electric fences with the "juice" turned up high...

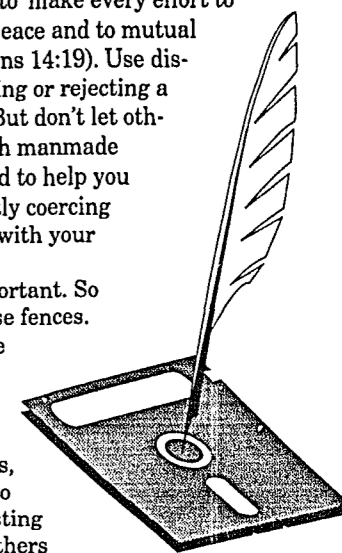
In *Transforming Grace*, Jerry Bridges helps clarify the boundary lines:

"For all of us, it may be good to have some fences, but we have to work at keeping them as just that—fences, helpful to us but not necessarily applicable to others. We also have to work at guarding our freedom from other people's fences.

"I'm not suggesting you jump over fences just to thumb your nose at the people who hold to them so dearly. We are to 'make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification' (Romans 14:19). Use discretion in embracing or rejecting a particular fence. But don't let others coerce you with manmade rules. And ask God to help you see if you are subtly coercing or judging others with your own fences."

Fences are important. So are "gates" in those fences.

Let's make sure our gates aren't rusted shut. Be willing to open your gate to others, and do your best to build sincere, trusting relationships so others may open theirs.



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Join us for Conference at Bethany College in Lindsborg, Kansas

August 7-13, 1994

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(This will also serve as
our Conference phone
number in August.)