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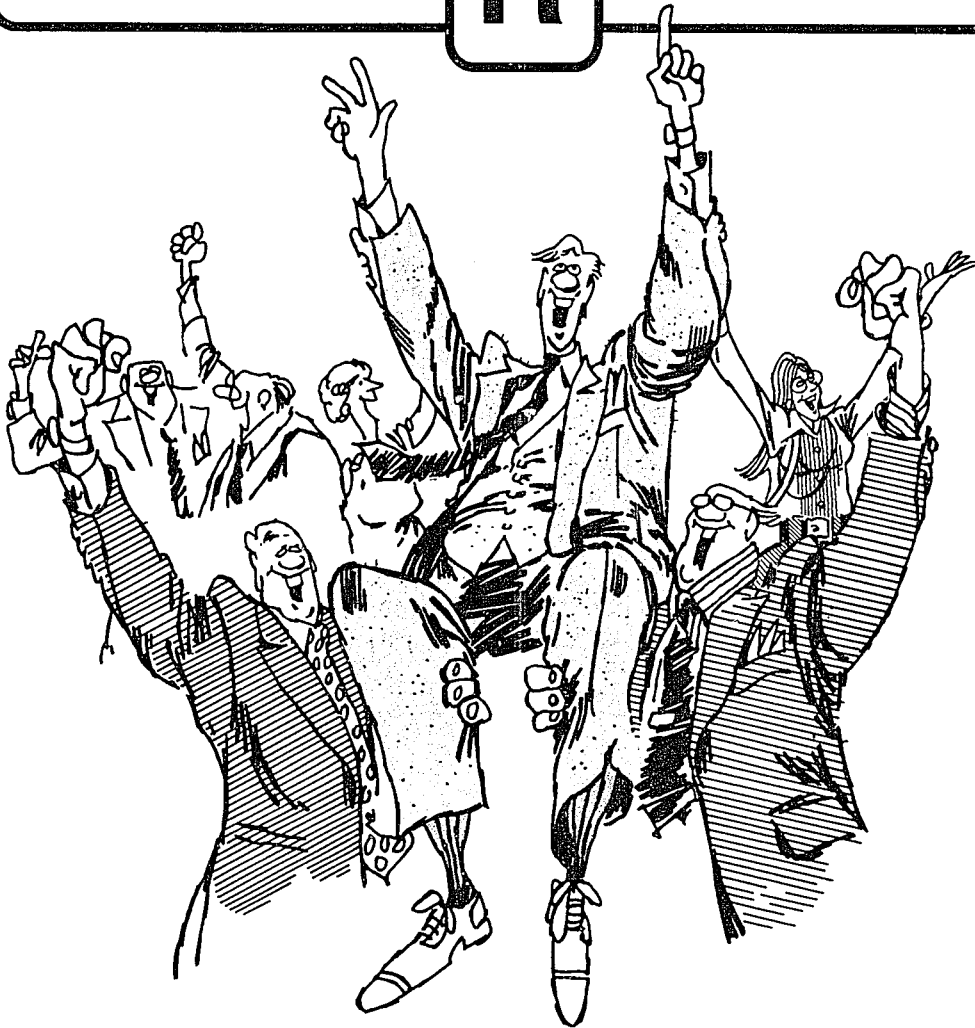
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News for and about
Seventh Day Baptists

November 1995

R

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Replacing distress
with *Joy*

How to support your pastor

SDB Missionary Society White Christmas Projects

Please consider these White Christmas gift suggestions for our sister Conferences:

Bibles

All of our sister churches need Bibles. Specific requests for Bibles come from: Camerons, Ghana, Guyana, India (both conferences), Indonesia, Malawi, Nigeria, Peru, The Philippines, Rwanda, Russia, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Zaire.

Study materials

Guyana, Malawi, Rwanda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Zaire

Bicycles

Indonesia, India, Malawi, Rwanda, and Zambia

Educational materials (school)

Malawi, Rwanda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe

Youth camps (Equipment and supplies)

Guyana, Malawi, Rwanda, and Zambia

Medical supplies (medicines, equipment, repairs)

Camerons, India, Indonesia, Malawi, Philippines, Rwanda, and Zambia

Glasses for ministers and evangelists

Eye glasses are either not available or the cost is prohibitive. Discarded glasses can be sent directly to

the coordinators of the countries. We would also be happy to forward funds to the coordinator to help purchase available eye wear.

Sewing machines

Funds for sewing machines could be sent to the Missionary Society or directly to the countries with available sewing machines, or machines could be purchased here and sent.

Malawi Bible College

Continues to need Bibles, reference and study materials, and scholarship help (\$500 per student per semester).

Orphanage in Nellore, India

Continues to need funds to complete the final buildings: clinic and school. The orphanage is open and running.

Drought relief

Drought conditions continue to exist in Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, and Zaire. They need funds to purchase food, medicines, and shelter for the homeless, widows, and orphans.

Names and addresses of coordinators of our sister Conferences and churches are available through the Missionary Society, 119 Main Street, Westerly, RI, 02891, or phone (401) 596-4326, FAX (401) 348-9494.

The Sabbath Recorder



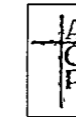
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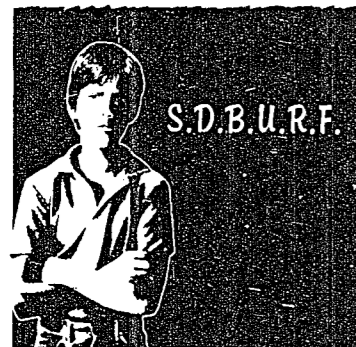
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"Class, how do you spell relief?"



"Correct!
Now,
follow
these
instructions":

Give generously to the SDB United Relief Fund through your local church on Thanksgiving Sabbath, or mail your gift directly to:

SDB United Relief Fund
3120 Kennedy Road
P.O. Box 1678
Janesville, WI 53547-1678

Your church on *The Helping Hand*

Would you like to see a photograph of your church or church camp on the front cover of *The Helping Hand*?

If your church is currently using *The Helping Hand* in your Sabbath School classes, you are invited to submit a recent photograph to the Board of Christian Education, P.O. Box 115, Alfred Station, N.Y., 14803-0115. Pictures should be 4 x 6 or 3 1/2 x 5 inches, black and white, or color with good contrast.

Please include the name of the church or camp, organization date, and date of the building's dedication. All submitted photographs will become the property of the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference.

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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

Replacing distress with joy

by Kenneth B. Burdick

Pastor Ken Burdick, of North Loup, Neb., presented this Conference message on the topic, "Joyfully serve in supporting faithful leaders."

Philippians 2:25-30 touches on some fundamental issues about the support a spiritual leader needs from God's people.

Paul is talking about a man named "Epaphroditus," sent by the church at Philippi to minister to Paul's needs during his first imprisonment in Rome. Epaphroditus is representative of all who undertake what Paul, in verse 30 calls, "the work of Christ" (those who give themselves fully to some service to which the Church has commissioned them). Though this passage could be applied to any number of servants in the body of Christ, I'm going to apply it mainly to those who are pastors.

One of the words which almost jumps out at you is the word "distressed" in v. 26. Paul describes Epaphroditus as not simply "weary" by his work for the Lord, or "burned out." He describes him as "distressed." He was hurting so much, that Paul chooses a unique word to describe how he was feeling. This word "distressed" is used in only two other places in the whole NT. Both of them are in the Gospels and describe the anguish of the Lord Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. As I studied that word, I recognized how many pastors in America today could be described in a similar way: they've served well, but they're really hurting.

Bill McCartney mentioned this problem at a Promise Keeper's Seminar in Denver just a few months ago. He spoke about look-

ing into the eyes of many pastors and seeing the same sorrow that he found in the eyes of his African American brothers who had suffered discrimination. A lot of pastors in America today have left the ministry. How much of a problem is that for Seventh Day Baptists? Well the Lord has had mercy on us, but we have a lot of pastors who, at certain times in their ministry, feel this kind of deep distress, as they seek to serve, and somehow find themselves floundering.

But the word distressed is not the only word that jumps out at you. There's also that little word "joy" in v. 29. It's used of the way Paul would like to see the Philippians welcome Epaphroditus when he gets back home. I want to explore how we go from the deep distress of a spiritual leader to the great joy that his congregation

eventually has in him.

Replacing distress with joy. What more fundamental issue could we deal with, if we're thinking about pastors in the world today? You might ask, "What's so special about pastors that when they start feeling blue, it's suddenly up to the rest of us to do something about it?" Well the short answer is that, in the body of Christ, we ought to care about one another, whether it's the pastor or anyone else who's hurting. The long answer is found in the analogy that could be drawn between Epaphroditus and our pastors of today.

Why should the Philippians be so concerned about how they relate to Epaphroditus? Because he almost died for the work of Christ. Epaphroditus was a faithful worker



who served Christ well, and sacrificially. I don't doubt the same thing could also be said of our SDB pastors today (though perhaps the only time they almost die for the work of Christ is in the pastors-youth basketball game!). Paul builds on this concept of faithful service by saying Epaphroditus' ministry was "to make up for the help you could not give me." That's a roundabout way of saying the Philippians "owed" it to Epaphroditus, in some sense. His faithful, self-sacrificing ministry was done in their behalf. So let's get to the heart of the text by asking, "What kind of support might we owe to our faithful pastors?"

Basic human friendship

First, we owe them the support of basic human friendship and brotherhood in Christ. In v. 25 Paul says he thinks it "necessary" to send back to the Philippians, this Epaphroditus, whom they had sent to him to care for his needs in prison. Why was this necessary? "For he longs for all of you..." What does that mean? There seems to be some kind of alienation between Epaphroditus and the church in whose behalf he is ministering. And this alienation cuts Epaphroditus to the heart. It's at the very center of the "distress" he's feeling. Something has happened, and Epaphro-

ditus feels a sense of loss in the human relationships that either he used to have, or that he wishes to have, with the people of the Philipian church.

What he longs for is not a "furlough" from his difficult ministry assignment. It's not better pay. It's not prestige or power or influence or a new "land rover" (!) What he longs for is the people; for that relationship with them as a Christian brother and friend. But something has caused the Philippians to grow distant in the way they relate to Epaphroditus. Paul urges them to "welcome" Epaphroditus. There's some restoring that needs to happen. He makes a special point of saying: "You welcome him... with great joy, when he comes back to you." One very basic way to support your pastor is to truly accept him into the human community which is your church.

There is not a pastor in our denomination who does not long for that friendship and brotherhood with the church they serve. And in most cases these pastors have left their families; they've left their childhood friends, whom they've had ties with through elementary school and high school; they've left their hometown roots behind. In addition, a pastor knows he's a kind of "transient." In just a few years, he might need to pick up and leave, and start all over again—seeking to feel part of yet another human community.

Don't let your pastor feel like

The greatest reward a pastor receives in this life is the knowledge that his service makes a difference in the spiritual lives of those he serves and loves.

he's a "man without a country." Don't let her feel like a complete "outsider" since she hasn't lived in your community or served your church for 20 years or 30 years, or

whatever it is. Don't let your pastor experience that because, you see, you have something in common in Jesus Christ, the minute he sets foot in your town! That feeling of being an "insider" is something that is most likely sacrificed by your pastor to pursue the work of the Lord. We owe our pastors the support of basic human friendship and brotherhood in Christ.

Seek ways to include your pastor. Include pastors in the things which are going on in the human community where you are. Find out what your pastor and family are doing on the holidays. Where are they at Thanksgiving? Where are they at Christmas? Most likely they don't have either the money or the time to go and be with their own families. This is an area where we can offer the support of that friendship in Christ.

You can also sit down with your pastor sometime and just ask to know about his life. That's what friends do. They want to know how you are doing. Ask your pastor about his family: "I know your daughter has been in college now for several months. How are things going for her? Is she fitting in? It must be tough to pay those tuition bills. Are you able to manage that right now?" Ask those questions, and if you do that enough, there may be a time when you ask a question and your pastor bursts into tears. Don't let it shake you! You say, "What do I do, if he does that?" Let him cry. Offer him the support and encouragement of a friend.

Not running them down

Second, we owe them the respect of not "running them down" before we know all the facts (and the mercy of tolerance when we do know the facts). The most likely reason for alienation between Epaphroditus and the Philippians

is a big misunderstanding about his illness. It's not just that the church heard about it, but what they thought.

It's highly probable Epaphroditus was receiving a lot of misguided, "wrong-headed" criticism back in Philippi: "All we wanted him to do was help Paul, and here the guy turns up sick. Big help he proved to be!" "Yeah," another person might say, "he just wasn't 'cut out' to be a minister. And I wonder how sick he really was. I bet the guy's just lazy. He's probably been faking some illness!"

If that's the kind of thing being said about Epaphroditus back in Philippi (yes, I'm speculating), it explains Paul's statements in verses 27 and 30. In the NIV, the word "indeed" is used: "Indeed, he was ill." Paul is very diplomatic, but if we were to paraphrase it, his words might run like this: "What are you talking about? Indeed, Epaphroditus was sick—very sick. Don't you people realize this man almost died in his service here!? And this deadly illness came as a direct result of his risking his life to do the work of Christ. It was by the mercy of God alone that he even survived, and yet you speak of him this way. You don't know the facts!"

Just as the Philippians owed Epaphroditus, we owe our pastors the minimal respect of not running them down before we know all the facts (and the mercy of tolerance when we do). In 1 Tim. 5:19 Scripture declares: "Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses." Note: witnesses, not gossips! Witnesses, who know the facts.

But even apart from formal accusations against our pastors, what about those "snide comments" and belittling remarks and instant judgments that sometimes people make? We owe our pastors better

than that. And if we're going to "run them down," let's at least have our facts straight before we do. Of course the still more excellent way is the way of mercy... and tolerance... and forgiveness.

A mutuality in ministry

We owe our pastors the support of basic human friendship and brotherhood in Christ. We owe them the respect of not running them down before we have all the facts. And third, we owe them our help in what I'd like to call, a "mutuality in ministry."

Paul is providing a model for the Philippians. He's saying, "To you, he's been your messenger, sent to minister to my needs. But to me, he's been a whole lot more than that. He's been my brother, fellow worker and fellow soldier in the Kingdom. He's neither your hired expert nor your hired hand. He's your fellow worker and fellow soldier and brother. Try to begin seeing him that way."

The concept might be called mutuality in ministry, and it's the concept that ministry is something done by believers in "connection" with one another—not in isolation from one another.

So often we place the pastor out there to do his service in isolation from the rest of the body. But the idea of doing service in connection with one another is the idea conveyed by the two words with the prefix "fellow-" (i.e., fellow worker, fellow soldier). It means "sharing together in" and applies to all ministry in the NT. The body of Christ, itself, is the greatest expression of this concept. As we apply the concept to pastors, we must not forget that they are members of the body, too. Like every other part, they function "in concert" with the rest of the body.

Some congregations think of their pastor as just somebody hired

to "mind the shop." If anything important is to be discussed or decided, it's the influential laymen who take that responsibility, not the pastor. Laymen may call special meetings or stand around after church discussing the church's ministry, but if the pastor approaches, all conversation stops.

An elite group wants to "do their thing" (everything important), and the pastor is supposed to "do his thing" (preach, run bulletins and preside at services). The message is conveyed: "Don't concern yourself about anything important in this church." That's isolating the pastor. "You go off and do your thing, like the janitor we hire to clean the building, but you're not really a part of this ministry." That is an extreme! I haven't really seen this, myself, but I've seen tendencies in different places.

Another variation of this is just the opposite: when the pastor is the hired expert, rather than the hired hand. It's a role less "demeaning" to the pastor, but it's just as far from mutuality in ministry. The pastor is like a hired gun. The congregation "lands" this superstar, and then they sit back, thinking: "OK, so impress me... entertain me... grow the church and make things happen." The pastor is like the CEO of a secular corporation, or like a football coach. If people think several pastors have had a few unsuccessful seasons, then you have this "musical chairs" effect of several churches swapping pastors. Within two years, there's another major reshuffling. And it will prove to be just as unsatisfying as the previous one because the problem is likely not to be the limitations of the individual pastor, it's the faulty concept of ministry.

Some of you may think: "He's trying to pass off the pastor's leadership responsibility onto the

cont. on page 22

A visit to Mill Yard

by Kyle D. Pratt

The British Rail train pulled away from Plymouth station at half past midnight to begin the five hour journey to London's Waterloo station. I walked along the narrow passageway looking for my sleeping compartment. Finding it at last, I entered and settled in. As I lay there in bed, I couldn't help but reflect on the recent events that had brought me to be on the midnight train to London.

The January issue of the *Sabbath Recorder* told of the death of Pastor Albourn Peat. He had been the pastor of the Mill Yard church of London since 1970. Then in May, I was saddened to read that no one knew of the church's status, or even if it was still Seventh Day Baptist. The thought that this church—the original SDB church—might fold or shift to another denomination was a sad thought.

For 16 years I have traveled the world serving in the U.S. Navy. I met my wife, Lorraine, an English woman, while visiting Israel. Our first home was in Scotland.

I came to the Sabbath while serving in Japan and joined the Seventh Day Baptist church in our home in Virginia. Now the Navy would soon be moving us again. We both agreed that I should try for assignment in England. Lorraine dreamed of returning to her native country. I told Lorraine that if we got stationed there, I would want to visit the Mill Yard church. She quickly agreed that it was a great idea.

When I mentioned my plans to Russell Johnson and Kirk Looper of the SDB Missionary Society, they encouraged me. Kirk provided me with the phone numbers of Deacon Ed Codrington of the Mill Yard church, and Pastor Lynch of the Birmingham church. But on the



Kyle Pratt (third from left) enjoyed a full Sabbath at the Mill Yard church. Deacon Codrington and Pastor Chapman are to his right; Oliver Chambers is in the middle of the back row.

day the orders came from the Bureau of Naval Personnel, they read "Hawaii"—literally the other side of the world from Britain.

Knowing that Lorraine was disappointed, I set out to find a way we could visit Britain. The military allows us to travel free, on a space available basis, anywhere a military plane is flying. Lorraine, my two sons and I soon found ourselves in jump seats in the belly of a cold cargo plane, heading to an American Air Force base in Suffolk on the east coast of England.

We arrived on the morning of June 22, and spent the day traveling by train across England. By that evening we were at my wife's childhood home in Plymouth, where her mother and a brother and sister still lived.

The next day I called Deacon Codrington, only to find that the number had been changed and was now unlisted. I phoned Pastor Lynch in Birmingham. He informed

me that Deacon Codrington had recently been married and was out of town visiting relatives. He gave me the deacon's current number, along with other contacts for the Mill Yard church.

After several unsuccessful calls to Deacon Codrington's home over the next few days, I decided to try the other numbers. "Lord," I prayed, "If you want me to visit the Mill Yard church, let this next call be successful." I dialed the number for Oliver Chambers.

"Hello," a pleasant British woman's voice answered.

"Hello," I replied. "Is this the Chambers' residence?"

"Yes it is," she said.

After introducing myself, I said that I would like to visit the Mill Yard church on the coming Sabbath.

"Oh?"

"Yes. We heard in the states about the unfortunate death of Pastor Peat. Many back there are con-

cerned and praying about the future of your church."

I later "met" her husband on the phone and got to know about Mill Yard. When I asked if they could make bed and breakfast reservations for my visit, they quickly invited me to stay at their home. So it was that I came to be on the midnight train to London that July 1st morning.

The change in the rhythm of the train as it pulled into Waterloo station stirred me from my sleep. By the time the conductor came with my tea I was dressed and shaved.

I took the London Underground to the Tottenham station and phoned Oliver Chambers. I described myself and said I would stand at the entrance. After several minutes I glanced to see a handsome black man salute me as he walked briskly down the sidewalk. I must have looked surprised because he saluted me again, then held out his hand and said with a distinguished British accent, "Brother Pratt, I am Oliver Chambers."

After proper introductions we walked to his car. Brother Oliver told me, "The church is determined to remain Seventh Day Baptist. We still don't have a full-time pastor but we do have a part-time one, Pastor Douglas Chapman. He comes down from Lincolnshire on the first Sabbath of each month."

Brother Oliver took me to his house and I got to meet his lovely wife Sylvia and his children, Corey, Ipana, and Jordan. At about 10:00 a.m. we walked the few hundred yards to the Mill Yard church. The original church disappeared long ago under the urban sprawl. The modern church is a large two-story row house at 41 Vicarage Road in London's Tottenham district.

We walked into the sanctuary that covered most of the ground floor. At the front end hung two wooden tablets, of obvious antiquity, with every word of the Ten Commandments in beautiful script. Between the plaques were large

windows. On the platform stood three wooden chairs. An equally attractive wooden pulpit bore the inscription, "Mill Yard Church." A piano stood below the pulpit.

At the rear of the sanctuary, a magazine rack held copies of recent *Sabbath Recorders*. Chairs for about 50 people were set out already. Brother Oliver opened a vault at the rear of the sanctuary and showed me a green ledger book containing a yearly listing of members dating back to 1670. Upstairs he showed me the church office, a kitchen and fellowship room, and another small room used as a library. This small room had Bibles dating back well over a hundred years, pamphlets dating back almost as far, and modern copies of *The Sabbath Observer*, the magazine of the Mill Yard Church.

Families and members began to enter the sanctuary. When they noticed the stranger (which didn't take long), they came up to introduce themselves and shake my hand. After a short business meeting and a few hymns, it was time for Sabbath School.

The children were dismissed to their class while the adults remained in the sanctuary. Deacon Barrett led the adult Sabbath School from the *Helping Hand*. The topic quickly centered on the call to be God's voice to the world. The lively discussion ended, appropriately enough, with the hymn, "Dare to Be Right." At noon a hand bell signaled for the children to return to the sanctuary. They recited parts of their lesson, then rejoined their families.

While the congregation sang a hymn, I noticed another person come in. I was introduced to this gentleman whom I had already guessed was Pastor Chapman. He had not known that I was coming, so I quickly explained to him who I was and why I was there. He asked me to join him in leading the service and, reluctantly, I agreed.

Brother Oliver, who made up the

bulletin, had already penned me in for the reading of the Psalm, the responsive reading, and the benediction. I chose one of my favorites, Psalm 90. Sister Jennifer Markland then sang a hymn for the children.

I was asked to introduce myself to all the congregation. I told them my personal testimony and how I came to be a Seventh Day Baptist. I closed by stating that the church in North America is very concerned about the health and future of the Mill Yard church, but from what I was seeing, that concern was unwarranted. Pastor Chapman read Job 28:1-4 and spoke on the Christian difference between knowledge and wisdom.

The service ended at about two o'clock with the congregation adjourning to the dining room for lunch. I had been given a seat of honor beside the pastor, and my plate was overflowing with food. The afternoon was taken up with more singing and Bible discussions.

During this time, I got a chance to speak with Pastor Chapman alone. He told me that he was trained as a Seventh-day Adventist minister but had come to believe differently and had left that church. He was now committed to the Seventh Day Baptist church and wanted to do what he could for the Mill Yard group. He was working to develop local leaders and was hopeful for the future.

Finally he said he should start the long drive back to Lincolnshire. We shook hands and said our good-byes. It was now after five o'clock. My attention turned back to the sanctuary where a discussion on how to live the Christian life was winding down.

Even when the discussion ended, people were lingering. These people were not just friendly, they were friends. Slowly the last few people drifted out.

At six o'clock, Brother Oliver locked up the church and we walked home together. It had been a good Sabbath. *SR*

God's Holy Day

by Lester G. Osborn

The booklet "God's Holy Day," first written by Lester Osborn in 1956, is now in its ninth edition. This is the fourth of seven lessons.

The First Day of the Week in the New Testament

We infringed on this lesson a little in discussing Paul's observance of the Sabbath, but we must go a little further into the subject. If the first day of the week had replaced the Sabbath as the weekly day of rest and worship—either by command or example of Jesus Christ or any of His apostles—it should have held a prominent place in the New Testament. It would have been considered sacred, the regular day of worship.

Just what is the status of the first day of the week in the New Testament? As we examine the records, we find the phrase, "first day of the week," used just eight times: six times when referring to the discovery of the Resurrection, once in connection with a meeting of Christians on the eve of that day, and once when referring to first days in general. In all, just two specific first days!

A. The Discovery of the Resurrection

1. Luke 23:56—24:3; Mark 16:1-2.

The Sabbath just preceding the Resurrection was observed by Jesus' followers. The next day, the first day of the week, they came to the tomb to anoint His body—to work! They found the tomb empty!

2. John 20:1; Mark 16:9. (Note: Scholars tell us that in Mark 16:9, "early" qualifies "appeared" and not "rose.")

Mary, Peter, and John found the tomb empty on the first day of the

week, but they thought that Jesus' body had been stolen. Later, Jesus appeared to Mary. She went and told the others that she had seen Him, but they "did not believe it" (Mark 16:11).

3. Matthew 28:1.

The Greek *opse* literally means, "late." The American Standard Version, which is the most exact translation, translates it correctly: "Late on the sabbath day." The Revised Standard Version is in error on this point, translating *opse* as "after."

**The seventh day is the "Lord's Day."
It belongs to the Lord, He calls it His own,
and Christ Jesus declared Himself its Lord.**

The Englishman's Greek Testament and the Riverside Cambridge both have it "late." Lamsa's *Gospels from the Aramaic* has, "In the evening of the sabbath day." Some of the "modern versions," like Good-speed's, incorrectly translate it "after."

The problem is in the phrase "as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week." How could it be "dawning" in the late afternoon? Two things clear up this seeming contradiction. First, the day began and ended at sunset. The new day began when the sun went down. Second, while the word "dawn," *epiphosko*, is used to describe the appearance of light in the early morning, it also has the meaning of beginning or approach. In Luke 23:54, it has this sense and is translated, "drew on"—"It was the day of the preparation, and the

sabbath drew on" (ASV).

The Riverside Cambridge New Testament gives the true meaning in Matthew 28:1, translating, "Late on the sabbath as the first day was drawing near." The Englishman's Greek Testament has it, "Now late on the sabbath, as it was getting dusk toward the first day of the week."

The first day of the week could not be "dawning" in the late afternoon of the Sabbath, but since the first day began at sunset, it could be "drawing on" or approaching.

This visit of the women "to look at the tomb" was toward evening on the Sabbath day. They found the tomb empty.

Late on the Sabbath day the tomb was empty—Jesus was gone!!

4. Note that all these references pertain to the same day of the week, and that the Resurrection is not described, nor the time it occurred. Only the discovery of the empty tomb is mentioned.

B. Supposed Traces of First Day Observance

1. John 20:19—with Mark 16:10-14 and Luke 24:11,36-37.

This is the first time the resurrected Jesus appeared to His disciples, who were behind locked doors for fear of the Jews. They were not gathered to celebrate the Resurrection, for they did not be-

lieve that Jesus had risen. There is no significance to the day; it was just the earliest opportunity He had to prove to the disciples that their leader was alive.

2. John 20:26.

"A week later" may possibly mean the following Sunday, but this is doubtful. (Cf. Matthew 17:1 with Luke 9:28. It might have been Monday or Tuesday.) Even if this does refer to Sunday, the day is not significant because the disciples gathered every day "for fear of the Jews." The specific day of Jesus' appearance is not important. The reason He appeared was to prove to Thomas that He had risen. (Thomas was absent when Jesus appeared earlier.) This was not a worship meeting.

3. Acts 2:1.

This may or may not have been the first day of the week, depending on when the Passover occurred, and the method used in counting. Even if this does refer to Sunday, there is no indication that the first day of the week was sacred. This passage refers to the sacredness of the Day of Pentecost. The gift of the Holy Spirit had nothing to do with

the day of the week. The disciples had simply gathered for the feast.

4. Acts 20:7-12.

This was not a weekly worship service but an incidental farewell service for Paul on "Saturday night" (following their regular Sabbath services). "Break bread" may or may not refer to the Lord's Supper. Even if it does, we see in Acts 2:46 that it was held every day, so this instance has no significance. What claim does the first day have to the Lord's Supper, anyway? It was not instituted on the first day, it does not commemorate anything that happened on that day, and there is no command to hold it on that day.

5. 1 Corinthians 16:2.

This passage refers to bookkeeping and to "set aside a sum of money" for contributions. There is no hint of any meeting of any kind, and no indication of sacredness—simply business.

C. The Lord's Day

1. Revelation 1:10.

This is not Sunday, but the "day of the Lord"—the judgment period that John writes about, into which

he was projected by the Holy Spirit.

2. Psalm 118:24.

This refers not to a specific day of the week, but to the period of the Gospel and of salvation—the age of grace (cf. 2 Corinthians 6:2).

3. Exodus 20:10; Isaiah 58:13; Mark 2:28.

The seventh day is the only day of the week which can lay claim to the title, "Lord's Day." It belongs to the Lord, He calls it His own, and Christ Jesus declared Himself its Lord.

Conclusion

The phrase "first day of the week" occurs just eight times in the New Testament—six which refer to the day the Resurrection was discovered. Only one other specific "first day" is mentioned, and that pertains to a meeting on "Saturday night." In the remaining passage, first days in general are referred to as days for bookkeeping at home, not for assembling in church. Nowhere is the first day referred to as sacred or significant. Sunday was one of the six working days; the seventh was the Sabbath—the true "Lord's Day" when they worshiped. $\text{\$R}$

Christian Education White Christmas gifts

The Board of Christian Education suggests that you consider giving a Christmas gift to send *Helping Hands* to Jamaican Seventh Day Baptists, or a 1996 Pre-Con Camp Gift Certificate for your grandchildren, nieces or nephews, SCSC worker, or a member of your congregation.

The currency exchange rate and additional bank draft expenses create a burden for our Jamaican brethren when they prepare to pay for *The Helping Hands*. At the time of this appeal, the exchange rate is 36 Jamaican dollars to one United States dollar. A quarterly copy of *The Helping Hand* costs \$45.00 Jamaican money.

Will you help us provide these valuable Sabbath School books for the people of Jamaica?

You may purchase a 1996 Pre-Con Camp Gift Certificate from the Board of Christian Education for \$25, \$35, \$45, or the full fee of \$90 (Youth). We will mail the gift certificate to you or to anyone you designate. Please include the camper's name, birth date, address, and camp attending, and whether you wish the certificate sent directly to the camper or returned to you.

Send your checks to the Seventh Day Baptist Board of Christian Education, P.O. Box 115, Alfred Station, N.Y., 14803-0115. $\text{\$R}$



Women's Society page by Charlotte Chroniger

SDBs represented in Argentina

A report by Donna S. Bond
SDB Women's Society President

"Why me? Why now?" I groaned as I attempted to straighten up after loading my dishwasher and felt the all-too-familiar stabbing pain of a pulled muscle in my lower back.

It was Monday, July 24, the last day before my departure for Baptist World Alliance (BWA) and Women's Leadership Conference meetings in Argentina. My questions had a familiar ring; it seems something always happens to me just before or during Conference!

I had questioned what "the Lord was trying to tell me" more than once, but gained a new perspective later in the week, when a new sister from Africa assured me that "Satan doesn't want you attending these conferences!"

My South American experience consisted of four main "events": annual NABWU (North American Baptist Women's Union) Executive Board meetings, the worldwide Women's Leadership Conference, Baptist World Alliance, and three days touring Brazil.

NABWU, consisting of about 40 Baptist women's leaders from English-speaking North American countries, met in the Bauen Hotel in Buenos Aires on July 27 and 28, as did NABWU's counterparts from the other five continents. It was good to re-establish rapport with my NABWU friends before entering into the larger community of 400 leaders from 90 countries who would participate in the Women's Leadership Conference.

One of the first of these ladies to make herself known to me was Mrs. Dorothy D'Alpuget, former president of the Australasian SDB

Conference. How good it was to know that I was not alone!

During the opening assembly on Friday evening each conference group was introduced. In spite of my back problem, I was able to stand tall and lead the applause for the "Women's Society, Seventh Day

of Women to the Christian Faith." (I have both of these on videotape and in printed form, and can make them available to anyone who is interested.)

There was cause for special celebration on Sabbath (how appropriate!) when 17 new conventions

**Thanks to Barbara Barber's unrivaled talent,
I marched behind absolutely the most stunning
of the banners and took my place on the stage
as 8,000 Baptists sang my favorite hymn,
"To God Be the Glory"!**

Baptist General Conference, USA & Canada!"

Each of us then laid a yard of fabric symbolizing our country or ourselves on a wooden cross. A six-inch patch was taken from each donation to be used in a patchwork quilt, and the rest was woven into four tapestries representing the "four corners" of the world from which we had come. It was fun to watch the tapestries and the quilt "grow" as the week progressed, and to learn of the symbolism involved.

The theme for the Leaders' Conference was "In Christ We Celebrate Life" (or "En Cristo Celebramos La Vida") with a special daily emphasis on "Organize," "Evangelize," or "Sympathize."

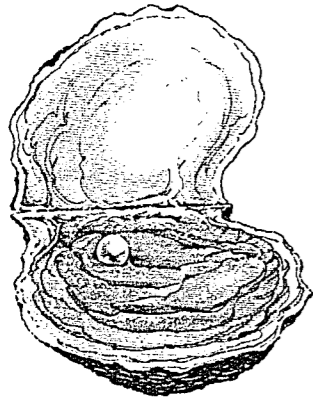
We were also blessed with two excellent Bible studies presented by William E. Hull, Provost of Samford University. The topics were: "The Place of Women in the Christian Faith" and "The Winning

were welcomed into our fellowship. Several of the delegates inspired us with their stories of enduring Communist rule or other hardships because of their faith.

On Sabbath evening, we were all invited to share crafts, food, music, and customs at the traditional Friendship Fiesta. This was my opportunity to distribute special issue *Sabbath Recorders* and some Sabbath tracts. More opportunities for this arose during the week on an individual basis.

On Monday morning, we held our official business meeting, culminating in the introduction of new BWA Women's Department World Officers: Mercy Jeyaraja Rao (India) as president and Irene Haase (Germany) as secretary-treasurer. These ladies succeed Catherine Allen (USA) as president and Aduke Akinola (Africa) as secretary-treasurer. They will serve

cont. on page 26



In September's "SR Reaction" column, Madelene Parrish commented about letters to Mizpah Greene which appeared on the Children's Page of bygone days. She wrote:

"I wonder how many years Mrs. Greene had 'her' page in the SR and how many hundreds of letters she answered? Maybe Don Sanford will refresh our memories sometime in his 'Pearls.'"

I cannot give an accurate count to the number of letters she answered, but I can report that the first Children's Page under her editorship was May 9, 1927. Her last column was January 2, 1956, nearly 29 years later. However, her service to children extended far beyond those years.

As early as 1904 she was asked to edit a proposed department in *The Helping Hand* for the Primary Sabbath School teachers. The records for General Conference sessions in 1904 take note of the fact that "Children, eighty in number, met in the church under the leadership of Mrs. Walter Greene of Alfred, NY." Those of us who grew up in the Western Association can remember some of her story hours and sessions for children at Association meetings.

When Mizpah Greene assumed editorship of the Children's Page, it generally contained stories of interest to children, but more often read by the adults. In her first page, Mrs. Greene asked children to help make this page their very own.

Pearls from the Past by Don A. Sanford, historian

"Dear Mrs. Greene:"

"Perhaps you have some cunning pets that you can write about, or a little story or poem of your own composition. Maybe you would like to write a letter to me or to the other children. You may have some extra funny jokes... or may know of some interesting incident you can share with us... Come on boys and girls! Who is going to be first?"

About a month later, June 6, 1927, the first response came from a 10-year-old girl, Rachel Crouch from Nortonville, Kan. Another month later, three letters appeared, one of which was from Madelene Parish's sister, Arabeth Lewis of Battle Creek, Mich. (Madelene's first letter appeared July 13, 1931.)

The subject of pets and other animals was a favorite among the early writers. Arabeth had cats named Perkins, Tag, Grimalkin Gray, and Tom-to-tee. She also coaxed a black squirrel with a nut which was eaten on top of her head. Margaret Lowther wrote about her cats Squeezix and Skeezi. She also showed her early interest in genealogy when she said that her grandfather was H.W. Rood who wrote for *The Sabbath Recorder*.

The list of early writers to the Letter Exchange reads almost like a Seventh Day Baptist Who's Who. Many parents became involved in the process. The youngest writer that I was able to find was Helen Ruth Green who wrote, "I am only half a year old but I hope I am not too little to be one of your *Recorder* children. I saw you at Conference last summer.... I wish more children my age would write."

Sometimes mothers had considerable imagination, as in this letter from a Gordon Lee Sanford of Little Genesee, N.Y., who wrote:

"I am five years old, but next month I will be six. I cannot write a letter yet, but I will tell mother what I want to tell you about. Next

year I am going to school.

"Maybe daddy will give me an Indian suit for my birthday. I like to play Indian. One summer my cousin Kenny Hugh brought me an Indian hat. My little brother's name is Don. One day he pulled all the feathers out, then pulled out all the pretty flowers in mother's blue bowl and put the feathers in instead. Did you ever see a feather bouquet?"

He also echoed a thought which was repeated in many of the letters: "Every Sabbath day, Mother reads the *Sabbath Recorder* to grandma; then we go into her room, and she reads the letters to us. I like to hear from other boys and girls."

In my first letter to Mrs. Greene I wrote:

"I am only five years old so I can't write but Gordon will do it for me. I go to kindergarten in the morning. We have blocks and a big doll house. The carpenter boys made it in shop. We have an orchestra too. Sometimes I play the cymbals or the bells. I like stories."

(I never got much beyond that stage of orchestra playing, but I have built a few doll houses in later years.)

Although a few families were very regular in their writings, such as the Butler girls in Alabama; the Burdick twins, Emma and Esther, of Leonardsville, N.Y.; and Frances, Doris, and Martha Langworthy of Alfred Station, N.Y., the variety of names and places were well represented. Frequent letters came from Jamaica, and Brier Thorngate wrote several times from Lieu-ho, China. The letters to Mrs. Greene provided an important link for some of the lone-Sabbathkeeping families and brought others into closer friendships.

A 1930 letter from Harriet

cont. on page 24



SR Almanac

Where we
have been...

One year ago—November 1994

Main features include Conference sermons by Pastors Harold King and Gordon Lawton.

Testimonies shared from students of the Sabbath School Teacher of the Year, Alan Crouch.

Carrol Burdick reflects on the old Andover, N.Y., church.

New pastoral ordinations: Luis Lovelace in Atlanta, Ga., and Dale Smalley in New Auburn, Wis.

More reviews from Conference workshops.

Five years ago—November 1990

Pastors Bill Shobe and Dale Rood focus on theme of prayer.

President of Concerts of Prayer International, David Bryant, speaks to the global prayer movement, and adds his favorable comments toward our MORE 2000 plan.

Church news: four churches host SCSC teams; Denver hosts Natural Evangelism Training weekend; new groups growing in Missouri; Milton, Wis., church celebrates 150th anniversary and hosts North Central Association.

Missionary Tom McElwain closes his ministry in Finland.

10 years ago—November 1985

Lead article explains the T.I.M.E. (Training in Ministry and Extension) program, an educational option for pastoral leaders.

Jim Ayars of The Heralds Quartet reports on unsuccessful attempt to contact SDB James Chang while touring China.

Brother Teofilio Estendar wounded by a gunman while giving a Bible study in the Philippines.

New York State Assembly of SDB Churches dissolves. Group suggests a new regional association.

Another Conference sermon on the Great Commission presented by Pastor Gabriel Bejjani.

25 years ago—November 1970

Clifford Beebe guest edits special outreach issue. Writers include Connie Coon, Jim Mitchell, Paul

Burdick, Lloyd Seager, John Bevis, David and Paul Beebe, and SCSC workers Karen Osborn, Patty Lawton, and Jan Mitchell.

Conference sermons presented by Rex Burdick and Herb Saunders.

Methodist seminary student survey cites "the pastor" as the most influential factor in the decision to enter the ministry.

Ministers on the move: Wayne Babcock to Verona, N.Y.; Rex Zwiebel to Center for Ministerial Education office; David Clarke to Board of Christian Education; Victor Skaggs to North Loup, Neb.; Alan Crouch to DeRuyter, N.Y.; and Francis Saunders to Westerly.

John Camenga called to ordination by the Salemville, Pa., church.

50 years ago—November 1945

The North Loup church's Sabbath School float wins first place in the "Pop Corn Days" parade.

Charles Bond and Edwin Shaw featured in "Our Pulpit" column.

New England Yearly Meeting gathers in Newport, R.I. The original church communion set is used during Sabbath service.

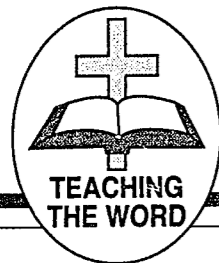
Pacific Coast Association meets in Los Angeles; Semi-annual meetings held in Dodge Center, Minn.

New editor K.D. Hurley encourages use of radio in SDB outreach. Hurley institutes new mini-features: "Pin Point Editorials," "Editorial from the Past," "First Things First," "Thumbnail Sketches," "Study to Show Thyself Approved," and "Old-Timer Sez..."

...where are we headed?

Pray—

- for your pastor
- for your Sabbath School teacher
- for long-lasting effects from Conference
- for our SCSC and T.I.M.E. programs
- for SDB brothers and sisters worldwide
- for pastors' families in new locations
- for God's blessing on our outreach attempts



1995 Sabbath School Teacher of the Year

Madeline Fitz Randolph of the Boulder, Colo., Seventh Day Baptist Church received the *Crystal Apple Award* as the 1995 Sabbath School Teacher of the Year. The presentation took place during the General Conference Awards Ceremony at West Virginia Wesleyan College, Buckhannon, W.Va.

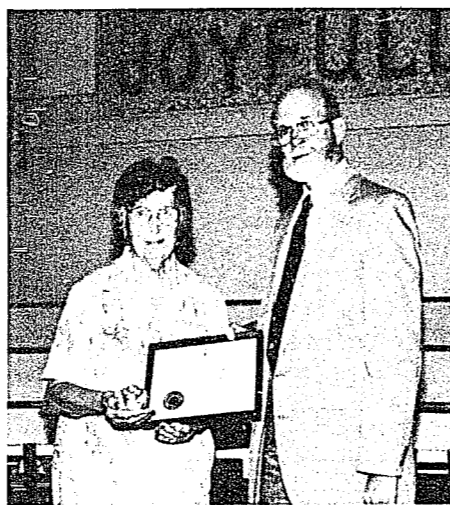
The Rev. Ernest Bee Jr., Executive Director of the Seventh Day Baptist Board of Christian Education, presented the *Crystal Apple* and certificate to Madeline. She was joined on stage by her husband, the Rev. Elmo Fitz Randolph. The Fitz Randolphs live where the eagles fly, high in the Rocky Mountains adjacent to Camp Paul Hummel.

Our recipient was born in West Virginia, and is a graduate of Fairmont (W.Va.) State College. Madeline has also studied at Alfred

Milton, Wis.; and Boulder. She worked for 16 years as a media specialist with the Boulder Valley Schools.

Madeline has served as president of the Seventh Day Baptist Women's Society, editor of the Women's Page of *The Sabbath Recorder*, member of the Executive Committee of the North American Baptist Women's Union, and a dedicated worker at Crandall High School in Kingston, Jamaica. She has served as the advisor to countless pastors' wives. Her compassion and wisdom are cherished by her many friends.

The Boulder Sabbath School class which Madeline teaches submitted testimony from its mem-



Lifelong student and teacher Madeline Fitz Randolph is presented the *Crystal Apple Award* by the Rev. Ernest Bee Jr.

"It is true that our class will suddenly go on a typical sideline to the lesson out of *The Helping Hand*, but Madeline will always bring us back into the center focus of the lesson."

She has been teaching the *Helping Hand* class for the past 13 years. The Boulder nomination states that "her most notable qualities are living the life of a Christian who really cares about others and her own desire to continue learning."

"This class has been a motivating factor for visitors to attend church regularly. Many times when other Sabbath School classes are canceled, this class finds a way to meet and study and possibly have a potluck meal, too. Even though her classroom is packed, they always make room for more." SR

"Our class will suddenly go on a typical sideline to the lesson out of *The Helping Hand*, but Madeline will always bring us back into the center focus of the lesson."

(N.Y.) University, the University of Wisconsin at Whitewater, Northern Illinois University, and the University of Colorado at Boulder.

Madeline has served Seventh Day Baptist churches with her husband in Alfred Station, N.Y.;

bers: "[Madeline] is not only a fine lady who has given her life to Christ, but she shows this in her everyday life. Of course she shows this to our class, too, and for this we will always praise the Lord all the more!

The drought in Central Africa has continued. People of that region suffer with hunger, illness, and pestilence. It is a real test of endurance and patience.

Rwanda struggles to regain peace following the atrocities of war. Nigeria, with a large Muslim majority, struggles to hold on to the freedom to meet and serve our risen Lord. Indonesia, a country where the Sabbath is well known, has a large group of SDBs struggling to pay their leaders and support their outreach program.

All are areas of tribulation and strife as they work to conquer the influence of sin and Satan. All are areas that hold a test for compassion for all Seventh Day Baptists. Is it any wonder that these areas are seeing the most rapid growth? What a blessing to see the arm of God and the Spirit of Jesus working in these lands.

Ghana

We continue to hear of the evangelistic outreach of the church in Ghana. The adults and youth sacrifice work and time for evangelistic meetings to aid the Spirit in reaching all ages.

The lamp in their 16mm movie projector has burned out and we are not able to locate a replacement. The projector was one of their more valuable assets. They also need more filmed programs. Movies are a great way of gathering a crowd since television is not widely available.

If you have a 16mm projector—no more than 10 to 15 years old—you would like to donate, they would welcome it. Please do not worry about duplication. If they end up with more than one projector, they will develop another evangelism team.



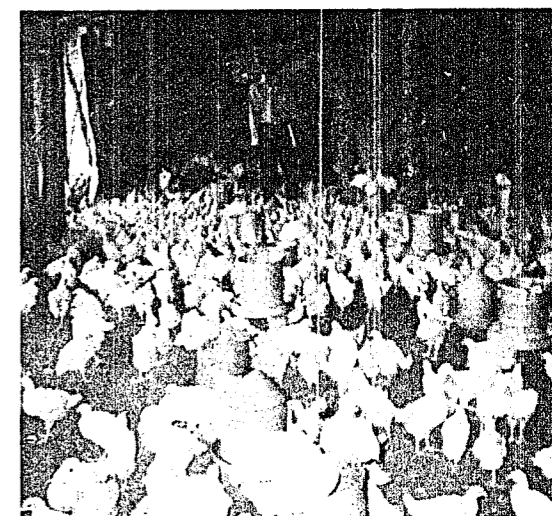
New Christians being baptized in Ghana.

The church in Accra, Ghana, also has a problem which most of our churches would welcome. They have outgrown their church.

Changing to a larger church building creates a problem. The increase in rent was not in proportion with the increase in growth, so they could use additional funds to cover the increase. \$50 per month would cover the use of the building for the church as well as the school. If your Sabbath School or church would be willing to adopt this portion of their needs, please contact the Missionary Society office.

Malawi

At Conference time, several donors to Malawi's poultry and fish projects requested information about their success. The projects are a success and continue to be a



This poultry project is a success in Malawi.

thriving means of food and some additional income. There were concerns that the drought would have prevented adequate water for food and drinking water. It appears that some of the projects were able to survive, even with the drought.

Praise God for the blessings He so abundantly provides. The project continues to need funds to produce more fish ponds and poultry houses. These projects are inspected by government officials. SR



the BEACON

Produced by the Youth Committee of the Board of Christian Education
For and by members of the SDB Youth Fellowship November 1995

Robins and Jesus, keeping the novelty

by Susie Butts

Every spring I anxiously look for the brick red and gray bird that has become a clear sign that our long winter is finally drawing to a close. The robin is one of my favorite birds for just that reason.

Last July, I remember seeing a robin hopping across the church lawn I was getting ready to mow. My feelings as I watched him fly to a bush were quite different than when I saw the first robin of spring. "Oh, it's just a robin," I thought. Then I realized how much my affection for robins had changed over the months. The novelty had worn off, and the once-beloved sign of spring was now "just another bird."

As I reflected about my change of attitude, I began to see a connection between robins and Jesus. When we first ask Jesus to be a part of our lives, we are very excited about the new relationship and

can't wait to serve Him and tell others about Him.

But all too often, as time passes, our enthusiasm dwindles. The novelty wears off, and we feel like we are just going through the motions, rather than having an exciting relationship with the Lord.

So, what can we do about it? Here's what I came up with:

• **Have a Daily Quiet Time.** Take time each day to read your Bible and talk with God. Find a passage of Scripture that encourages you and study it, or read through a book of the Bible, one or two chapters a day. Or do a character study on your favorite person in the Bible.

Then take a few moments to talk to God about what you discovered. Tell Him how your life is going, your frustrations, your joys, and ask for His help as you follow Him. Contrary to popular belief, a quiet time does not have to be done in the wee hours of the morning. It can be done any time you feel you can give Jesus your undivided attention.

• **Take a Retreat of Silence.** When the pressures and frustrations begin to overwhelm, it's good to just take a break and get away. Most of us, however, can't afford to go on a real vacation every time our life becomes too hard for us to handle.

Fortunately, taking a brief vacation with Jesus doesn't

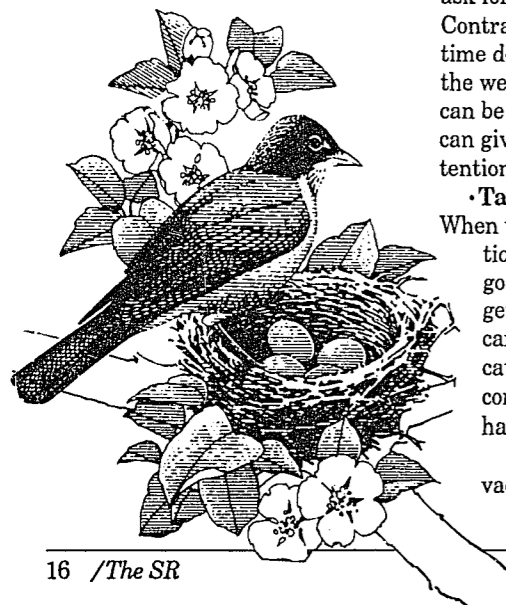
cost anything! Just grab your Bible, a pen and notebook, and go for a walk. Take a few hours and get back in touch with God. It works great when you've just finished school for the year, or when you're trying to make future plans. The Lord's calming reassurance will help remind you that He will take care of you.

• **Keep a Praise Journal.** It's easy to forget all the good things our Heavenly Father does for us. We often forget them before we remember to say a thank-you.

A praise journal can help us remember what we need to praise the Lord for each day. It's also a great spirit booster when we're feeling down. Some people say that they reflect on others less fortunate when they're feeling depressed. I'm sure that helps, but a greater encouragement for me is being able to reflect on all the things Jesus has done for me in the past. If He has taken care of us yesterday and today, He will also take care of tomorrow.

I hope that these suggestions will encourage you to see Jesus with the same enthusiasm you had when you first chose to follow Him. If you have other suggestions, I would be glad to hear from you. Or maybe you have a story of what the Lord has done in your life.

Send them to me at the SDB Board of Christian Education Office, P.O. Box 115, Alfred Station, NY 14803. Hopefully together we can make sure that Jesus doesn't lose His novelty in our lives. *SR*



Awakenings by Cindy Dickinson, Marlboro, N.J., SDB Church, for *The Beacon*

I wake up every morning,
and put my feet on the floor.
Sometimes I start in preparation,
just because I'm glad for whatever is in store.
Other mornings I sit and wonder
about how I'll get through this day;
twenty-four long hours
of potential sorrow and dismay.
We all have this variety of awakenings,
for we don't know what God really has planned
for each minute of our being,
in this forsaken land.
But because I go beyond belief
and trust in God's Holy Word,

hearing, reading, and accepting
how my Savior's love was poured;
my spirit will ascend to Heaven
where I know that whatever God has planned,
will be wonderful and magnificent
in that Holy Land.
The sun is like that Heaven.
It rises every morning,
conquers over darkness,
and gives heed without warning.
Be like that sun that wakes up every morning,
and put your feet on the floor.
Start in preparation,
and be glad for what's in store.



Seeking Spiritual Maturity: PRAYER

How should SDBs pray?

by Dale E. Rood

As I have grown in the Lord, I have come to see prayer as a matter of waging spiritual war. Ephesians 6:12 points to the nature of this battle: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against powers, against principalities, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

In this war, guns and atom bombs are mere toys. The armies of the world are mere pawns in the hands of the spiritual rulers who oppose the Lord of Hosts. The way to fight this war is not with mighty weapons of warfare, but down on our knees appealing to our God who controls the war.

This is not the sort of thing we see with our eyes or hear with our ears. We need an eternal perspective, what songwriter Twila Paris has called, "Forever Eyes."

This is what the disciples had when they prayed in Acts 4:23-30. They were seeing what God was

doing, and moving with Him in prayer. God responded by a new filling of the Holy Spirit that shook the place where they were and prompted them to be bold in proclaiming the Word of God. This is what Peter had in Acts 10:9 when he was praying on the rooftop.

Oh, that we might have forever eyes in praying for Seventh Day Baptists; that we might see the gigantic spiritual battles being waged over Seventh Day Baptists even as we read this article; that in response to our prayer the places where we are might be shaken and the Word of God proclaimed boldly.

One thing we can always pray for is that God be glorified. In praying for the sick, I can always pray that God be glorified and His power displayed in such a way that the sick person and those around him or her would see that it is God at work. I visualize God working in this situation and that lives would change as a result.

In healing, if God heals physically I rejoice that His power is displayed in the situation. But if heal-

ing does not happen in a way that can be measured by observation, I expect God's power and love to be displayed in some other way which we will be able to recognize. In praying for God to be glorified, always pray that His glory will be seen by the key people involved (John 9:3).

We can pray for these things on the authority of God's Word:

- Laborers for the harvest (Matthew 9:37-38)
- The rule of God to prevail (Matthew 6:10)
- Needs to be supplied—our own, our friends and loved ones, our church (Matthew 6:11, Philippians 4:19)
- Wisdom (James 1:5)
- Boldness to proclaim God's Word (Luke 1:74; Acts 4:29, 18:9)
- The peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6, Isaiah 62:6-7) *SR*

Dale Rood is pastor of the Dodge Center, Minn., SDB Church. Article first appeared in the November 1990 SR.

A road map to the church

(Part two of President John Peil's Conference message.)

Our absolute bedrock—besides Jesus, the apostles, and the Bible—is a strong family system. As Seventh Day Baptists, we cannot exist without a strong family system. The family is where values are taught. The next generation is instructed in what's really important.

There's a need to meet on the Sabbath Day. We reaffirm that there's more than just our family, but there are many families out there who also keep the Sabbath. And that's why we don't have many rules.

As I get up on the Sabbath Day in my church, as the pastor, I don't pronounce *how* people should keep the Sabbath; I reaffirm that the Sabbath is right. When people go home with their families, their *families* tell them how to keep the Sabbath. We have Sabbath Schools, but it's in our families where people are instructed, "Here's how you conduct yourself as a Christian."

As we look at our Statement of Beliefs, there are few rules there. Because it is the family which tells us our rules. It's the family that gives us our values.

It's the family that tells us, "Here's what you will and will not do on the Sabbath; here's how you will interpret the Scriptures; here's who Jesus Christ is." Then we reaffirm that as we come to church on the Sabbath.

A Seventh Day Baptist church with a strong kinship system will meet on Sabbath morning, then on holidays occasionally. I hear people saying all of the time, "I went to the church and no one was there. It was during the week." Well, they have a good strong kinship system. They meet Sabbath morning.

The rest of the time, we meet where things really important happen: our families. It's no wonder that we only meet on Sabbath morning.

Just as an aside, it's interesting to be a pastor in a kinship system. You have a completely different rule. I went to seminary, I have two graduate degrees. But no one ever taught me how to function as a pastor in a kinship system.

I remember getting to Verona, N.Y., my first church. My wife was panicked because cows were walking through the back yard. (We

had just come from Los Angeles. We knew what to do with gang members who walked through the back yard...) So I said, "Don't do anything rash. We'll get sued!"

Every pastor should be given a road map to the church. It described every relationship, and every family.

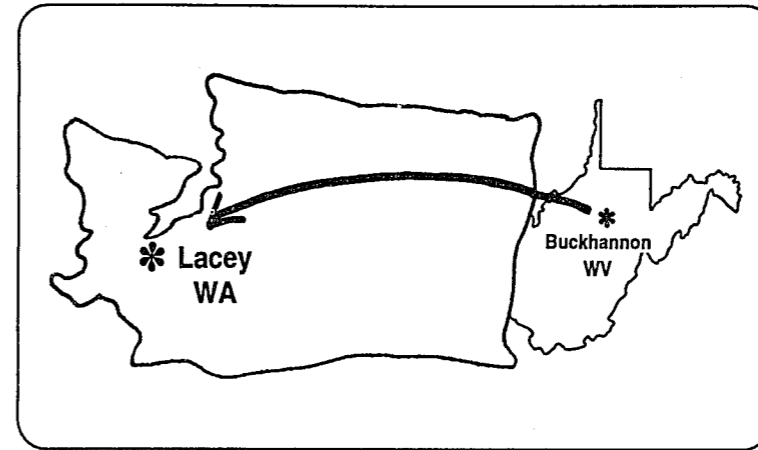
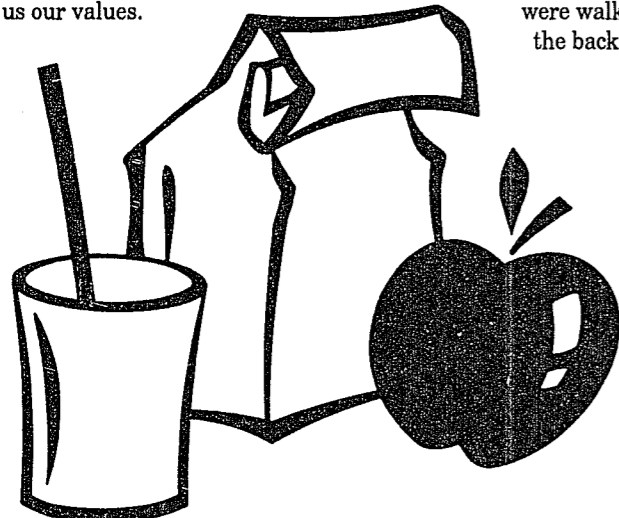
We were sitting there as Marilyn Davis was trying to explain the church to me. And she was staring into my blank eyes. Finally she just grabbed a brown paper sack. I still have that sack. She smoothed it out, and drew all the relationships in the church and said, "There, John."

I looked at that, and you know, I saved that thing because that is a road map to the church. Every pastor should be given one of those as they take their church. A road map to the church. It described every relationship, and every family.

In 1983, I took my first psychological course. They talked about systems theory and Bowen, and they drew everything I had on that brown paper sack! I said, "Whoa! I recognize this! I'm going to get a degree in this!" It was tremendous. Marilyn was ahead of her time.

Every pastor needs that brown paper sack, because that's the road map to the church.

It's part of our kinship system, and we have to have a strong family system. *SR*



Echoes of Conference '95

by K.D. Hurley, for the Host Committee

Favorable echoes of August's General Conference in Buckhannon started reverberating among the West Virginia hills, even before Conference was over. Now those echoes are resounding throughout SDB denomination-land!

Last month, *The Sabbath Recorder* published Conference articles and pictures, helping Conference attendees to "re-live" their experiences and strengthen their sense of spiritual up-lift from Conference. Those who could not attend got the feel of exhilaration and encouragement that comes from being at Conference.

Host Committee Chairman Stanley K. Allen, in a statement from the *Conference Crier*, highlighted key reasons for the special success of Conference '95. He congratulated President Myrna Cox and her staff "for preparing and presenting a most exciting, interesting, inspiring, spiritual, and musical Conference."

It is certainly true that all parts of the program were outstanding: the seminars, the worship services, the prayer times, the reports from the Boards and Agencies, the Bible studies, and the music. In addition, the business of Conference was conducted in an orderly, constructive fashion.

Because of the quality of the event, SDBs had the opportunity to make themselves better known and

favorably recognized. Widespread publicity in area newspapers, on radio and TV (including the professionally-made SDB video "A Choosing People," as well as promotional spots), provided excellent exposure.

With these factors, plus an ideal campus setting in beautiful surroundings, it is no wonder that the Conference was well attended—climaxed by over 900 people at the Sabbath morning worship service. Host Committee Chairman Allen reports a record Conference attendance with 772 participants officially registered.

Of the overall registration, it is significant to note that approxi-

the many happy, positive, constructive echoes of this year's Conference.

The Host Committee members also want to express great appreciation for so many church members coming from all parts of the USA and Canada (as well as from other countries). This helped put SDBs "on the map" in West Virginia and surrounding states.

Echo by echo, Conference '95 fades into memory. Thoughts of the past begin to blend with anticipation of the future.

Now, it is time to start preparing to attend and participate—with enthusiasm and dedication—in the

SDBs had the opportunity to make themselves better known and favorably recognized.

mately 225 were young people. Chairman Allen, in his *Conference Crier* report, stated, "The large number of youth speaks well of their interest in denominational matters and the future success of Seventh Day Baptists."

Members of the Conference '95 Host Committee join the chairman in commending the youth—one of

1996 Conference to be held on the West Coast.

All SDBs are challenged to maintain the momentum established by General Conference meeting in Buckhannon, W.Va. Let's be ready for another historic meeting—the 1996 "edition" of Conference convening at St. Martin's College in Lacey, Wash., August 4-10. *SR*

Ethel Wheeler receives Robe

Ethel Wheeler grew up in southern Florida. She and her sister were raised in an active Seventh Day Baptist family where she learned the joy of the Sabbath.

Seeking a further education, she chose Salem (W.Va.) College, where she was a member of the Women's Quartet. She met and married her husband, Alton Wheeler, there in 1941. He went on to study for the ministry.

Ethel worked as a teacher and secretary in the educational field. All of that was laid aside to help her husband deal with a growing church and raise their two children.

A Sabbath School teacher for many years, she was also involved in camps, many times as head chef. She had a true love of children.

After her own children were grown, she returned to work many years in the various departments of a state university.

Ethel is known as a meticulous housekeeper. She has also been known for her unusual organizational ability. Her custards to ailing fellow church members are noteworthy, as well as whole meals arriving just in the nick of time. She likes people, is witty, and fun to be with.

She has been a gracious hostess on many occasions. Dedicated service workers made their home with her family. Denominational employees from out of town would often stay with them overnight.

Ethel served as an early member of the *Beacon* staff. For 10 years she was a member of the Board of Trustees of the American Sabbath Tract Society. She served as treasurer from 1966 to 1968, and assistant treasurer from 1969 to 1973. She then became vice president and a member of the Society's Audio-Visual and Advisory Committee.

She was a member and secretary of the Women's Board. At one time, she was a member of the denomination's Young People's Board. She was secretary to Harry North at the SDB publishing house for many years. She served with her husband at the following churches: Friendship (Nile), N.Y.; Richburg, N.Y.; Battle Creek, Mich.; and Riverside, Calif.

No man serves as Conference president without the able support of his wife. Such was the case in 1950 when her vice president husband was called on to chair the sessions as the president suddenly had to return home.

She was also there with her support when Alton was elected Executive Secretary of the denomination. During this time, they made two trips to Jamaica representing Seventh Day Baptists of this country. Their second trip was in 1968, the same year she was the speaker for the Women's Banquet at Conference.

Ethel was a delegate to the Seventh Day Baptist World Federation. She attended the first session in Westerly, R.I., in 1971, and also



Jean Lewis (left) places the Robe on Ethel Wheeler at the Riverside, Calif., church.

in 1978 when the Federation met in Alfred, N.Y.

In 1971, she accompanied her husband to Ethiopia for the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches. On that same trip, they visited and worked with our SDB brethren in Malawi.

During their many trips abroad, by action of the Women's Board, she represented them in her contacts with women in any of the world groups, always traveling at her own expense. This was a true sacrifice for someone in God's service.

Ethel has been described as one very special lady. Through adversity, she has grown to deserve her Lord's "well done thou good and faithful servant" designation.

On behalf of the Women's Board, it is our great pleasure to present Ethel Main Wheeler the 1995 Robe of Achievement. *SR*



Ethel admires the fit of her new robe as many loving admirers look on.

Nortonville looking forward

Reprinted from the *Nortonville Messenger*

The Nortonville, Kan., church voted in July to call Dr. Ken Smith and Rev. Steve Saunders as interim ministers while we are looking for a permanent pastor. Ken and Steve alternate Sabbaths in the pulpit.

The Evangelism Committee has been working to help us come to a recognition of the church's purpose and to catch the vision the Lord may have for us all.

The committee presented the first draft of a church mission

statement. Church members will have the opportunity to alter it as they wish after discussions. We will also be reviewing the church's Covenant and Constitution.

The church voted to send \$150 to the Red Cross for relief aid following the Oklahoma City bombing. We were all shocked and saddened by such a dastardly deed.

Our choir provided a lovely cantata on Resurrection Sabbath, led by Steve Saunders and accompa-

nied by Dorothy Lantern. We thank them all for their hard work and dedication to lead in worship in this way. The cantata was entitled, "Awake, My Soul, and Sing."

Prayer slips were passed out in church one Sabbath recently. Each slip had one name on it for someone to pray for that individual. In this way, each one of us who is connected to the Nortonville church is being prayed for. *SR*

SR Reaction

Opinions do not necessarily reflect the views of the SR or all SDBs. Letters may be edited according to space and editorial style.

Dear Kevin and the SR staff,

At regular intervals, I consider writing and never quite get around to it—so here is an abbreviated but heartfelt thank-you for continuing to place the SR in my home.

Although I've not been in a Sabbathkeeping church for almost 20 years, the North Loup (Neb.) SDB Church has always been referred to as my going "home" church, and the greater SDB family still holds a place in my heart.

The spiritual foundation I have today came from the North Loup church body. Growth came at Camp River-view, Youth Pre-Con, SCSC, and Conference. *The Sabbath Recorder* keeps me a part of my wonderful Christian heritage.

I loved the "What the SR means to me" issue. So many who contributed articles spoke my own heart's feelings about the impact of the SR on my life. I'm one of those "guilty" ones who jumps to the weddings/baby pages and then goes back to read it cover-to-cover.

I apologize for my lack of financial support. I'm hoping that the adage

"Better late than never" will apply here as well.

Thank you for providing this publication. It really is an integral part of the SDB heritage and "family" life.

Joni (Goodrich) Titsworth
Grand Island, NE

Dear Editor,

Yes! Yes! I want my Sabbath Recorder! No! No! Do not check me off the mailing list!

It has always been in my home—all 84 years! As a "P.K." I was always aware of its presence in the home and heard it read.

Having just celebrated our 62nd wedding anniversary, husband Bob and I have always had it in our own home. Now with muscular degeneration in both eyes, Bob cannot read and we have cancelled all his technical magazines (which I don't understand). He doesn't want me to bother to try to read those to him. But he gets to hear *The Sabbath Recorder*, cover-to-cover, because that is the way I have always read it.

Now I read it out loud to him, usually Sabbath afternoons, and discuss

its contents with comments like, "Do you remember 'so and so' or this and that incident?" He, too, is a "P.K.," and we have many memories of pastorates and of SDB communities where we have kept house together.

Getting old really is not fun, but we have many fond memories. Among them is an old friend, *The Sabbath Recorder*.

Gladys Sutton Randolph
Englewood, CO

Dear Sir or Madam:

Thank you for sending me the materials so quickly. I also thank you for the *Sabbath Recorder* which I enjoy every month.

Your ministry has been a great blessing to me especially because my island does not have your church. You are an encouragement for me to keep the Lord's Sabbath.

I pray that the Lord will continue to guide you so that the body of Christ will be edified through your service.

Yukie Hirabayashi
Tamuning, Guam

Replacing distress, cont. from page 6

church—as if the pastor, somehow, isn't responsible for the church's successes or failures and shouldn't be held accountable for them!" Well, I don't deny the pastor's leadership responsibility, or his need to be an initiator, or his duty to give direction to the church, to the best of his ability. I'm just saying God called that man or woman to be a pastor, not a coach in the NBA. Maybe the fact many congregations

ministry" is all about.

Who is responsible for the ministry of the church? The models provided by the professional business world and professional sports have taught us to say: "The pastor is responsible for the ministry of the church. The buck stops there." Wrong! The congregation is responsible for the ministry of the church. And the pastor is responsible for the leadership of the congregation.

We owe our pastors the support of basic human friendship and brotherhood in Christ.

in America today have been treating their pastors like coaches in the NBA is why many of them have been leaving the ministry. They're like many college and professional coaches in recent years who've decided to take jobs as sports commentators. Maybe they're thinking, "Though I love the work, I owe it to myself (and to my family) to get a life again."

Mutuality in ministry—standing together, not apart, in what the pastor does and what the congregation does—is no abdication of a pastor's responsibilities as a leader. If the apostle Paul could speak of this Epaphroditus (who was basically just ministering to his material needs) as a "fellow worker and fellow soldier," I would guess that even this great apostle probably sat down with this ordinary person a number of times just to share his ideas about where his ministry ought to go next. If so, it didn't compromise the apostle's leadership. For a pastor to do the same sort of thing with different members of his congregation is what leadership in the context of "body

So let the pastor be a leader, yes. But let him also gather with the two or three... or even the 20 or 30, as he (and they) ponder together the work Christ has given the body to do.

Fellow soldiers are found in the trenches together, with their faces in the mud and their hearts in their throats—together. We owe our pastors the working environment of mutuality in ministry.

Honor which is due

And fourthly, we owe them the honor which is due sacrificial service.

"Honor men like him," says Paul. To paraphrase: "Value them, and let them sense that they are valued—for their work." The greatest reward a pastor receives in this life is the knowledge that his service makes a difference in the spiritual lives of those he serves and loves. That's what we pastors work for. It's not the pay—and I think SDB pastors can say that, even more than pastors from other denominations. We are not working for the pay. We're working to know that

we make a difference for you, even in some small way. But we don't know that our ministry makes any difference at all unless (at least once in a while) you tell us, so we might confirm our calling, and the direction the Lord is taking us in our ministry.

I have a little treasure trove in one of my desk drawers at home. Along with family mementos, my real treasure trove is a small collection of little notes, received from people I've ministered to. I have a couple of notes from kids, from senior camps in different years. I've got several notes from adults. One lady wrote to me during the week and said, "What you said in your sermon last week really helped me. I just wanted you to know that, and I just thank the Lord that you're serving here with us."

Wow! Do you know how valuable that is? When I get something like that, it's like God is giving me a great and wonderful gift through that person. And it's not to build up my ego, and it's not that I desire adulation and all that sort of prideful stuff. It's to have confirmation: yes, I'm where I ought to be; I'm doing what I ought to be doing because somebody has been affected. The Lord has used me to work in someone's life.

Some pastors preach their little hearts out. They visit people all over the place. They lead numerous committees. They try to sweat out what might be good for the church to attempt in its outreach. And there's nothing. Nothing comes back to them. They have no sense that what they're doing makes a difference to anyone. Don't give your pastor a "blackout" like that because it might cause him to question his calling.

I've been fortunate to have certain honors in my life. In high school I was second in my class. (OK, so it wasn't that big of a class!) And when I graduated from

college, I was made Phi Beta Kappa. But you know, the greatest honor in my life occurred three or four years ago up at Camp Paul Hummel. I'd made a presentation to the whole group of campers, and when I finished... they applauded! I almost dropped on the floor! Kids don't do that for "old foggy" pastors unless something has connected with them, and they honored me in that way. It's the greatest honor I think I've ever had in my life. And it's not an ego-builder, it's a confirmer.

Offer to pray for your pastor. Tell him you're going to pray for him five minutes a day for the next year. Do it for a few weeks, and then call him up on the phone and say, "Pastor, I know you're working with this lady up at the hospital who's really in bad shape. Today I was praying that you'd be given guidance, to know how best to minister to this lady." Boy, that'll make a difference! Call him again after a few weeks or a month, and say,


"I'm still praying for you, Pastor! You have any special things you'd like me to include in my prayers this week?" That's a real honor, and it's honoring the work the pastor is doing.

If you build a sense of trust with the pastor by showing friendship, then one of the things you can do to honor him in his work is to offer the right kind of criticism. Offer him "uncritical criticism," loving criticism. Show him where he needs to change and how he needs to improve in his ministry (if you have a true sense of that). Then you're helping him do what God has called him to do, and be better at it. That is a great honor, as well.

Does what we do matter?

What we pastors seek is the knowledge that what we do matters to you, whom we care about. And when congregations care about us... enough to offer us the support of their friendship and brotherhood in Christ; enough to respect us, and

not be running us down in the absence of the true facts of a situation; enough to help us create some genuine mutuality in our ministry; and enough to hold us in honor (not because of our popularity or our personality or charisma, but simply because we serve faithfully)... then there will always be well-motivated, Spirit-led men and women in the Seventh Day Baptist pastorate.

Perhaps we should seek to make that one of our SDB distinctives (like our Sabbath-keeping and our congregational singing): that we Seventh Day Baptists excel in supporting, and honoring, and welcoming into our midst, those faithful spiritual leaders God sends us. If we really live up to that, that distress which is making its little appearances here and there among our pastors is going to be a thing of the past. And joy will replace it... in their hearts, and in our hearts, as well! 

The Three Little P's

Once upon a time, there lived Three Little P's. These Little P's were very, very competitive. They would always try to outdo each other, to see who could go the highest.

The Three Little P's were a major part of the big, bad world of business—especially in publishing. One P's desire to go higher would make another P try to go higher, too. They were very competitive.

Pity the big, bad publisher. Because the Three P's tried to go higher, the publisher would have

to pay lots and lots of money for the Three P's. They were very competitive.

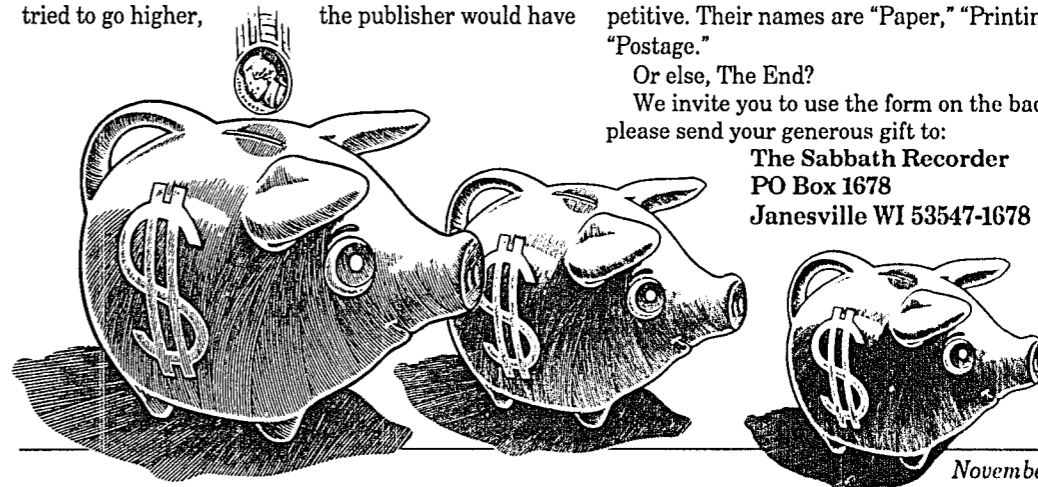
One year, the Three Little P's decided to gang up on the big, bad publisher and try to go as high as they could. Poor, poor publisher! He might have to stop his business.

Dear friend, could you please, please help this publisher pay for the Three Little P's? (We're really not that bad—or big.) The Three Little P's are very competitive. Their names are "Paper," "Printing," and "Postage."

Or else, The End?

We invite you to use the form on the back cover and please send your generous gift to:

The Sabbath Recorder
PO Box 1678
Janesville WI 53547-1678



Louise Saunders of Alfred, N.Y., added a P.S. which stated: "I made a new friend by writing last time. We have been writing to each other ever since. She is Ruth Green of Farina, Ill." Five years later, both Harriet and Ruth wrote of their friendship. Harriet told how her family drove to Farina on their way to Conference and picked up Ruth. "We spent a grand and glorious week in Milton together. I must confess, though, that we spent more time in Clear Lake than in the gymnasium at meetings." Ruth ended her letter with the note, "I spent the most memorable week of my whole life. I want to thank you for the most wonderful friend you helped me to find. I hope others may find friends through your Children's Page."

In 1935 the Sabbath School

superintendent at Dodge Center, Minn., asked one of the students to write an essay on, "What I think of the *Sabbath Recorder*, as a Child." An eighth grader wrote:

"I like the Children's Page best in the *Sabbath Recorder*. It helps us get better acquainted with other children of the denomination. Although I have never seen Mrs. Greene, it seems as if I knew her as a close friend.


"After I have read the Children's Page I usually turn to Missions. Through this, I sometimes learn of some of the people our folks talk about in Sabbath School, such as Doctor Palmborg or a letter from the Hargis family.

"I think the *Sabbath Recorder* has a good purpose and that it serves its purpose."

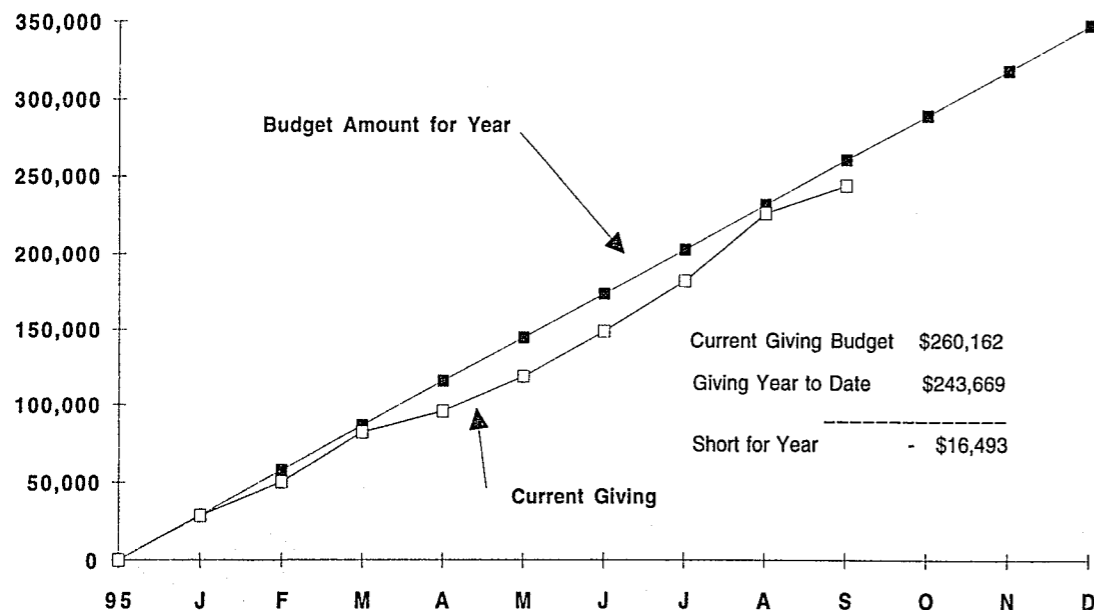
—Lorna Payne

Was this Lorna Payne Austin Graffius' start in her many areas of service to Seventh Day Baptists? Only God knows how many of Mrs. Greene's letter friends were encouraged through her many years of ministry to the children of her extended family.

I have become increasingly aware of a kinship which is not limited to genealogical relationships. The original words to the Young People's Rally Song expressed the thought that "we're scattered from Texas to Rho-dy, the state whence our forefathers came..." Now our young people sing, "united from Cali' to Rho-dy."

What caused this change? Was it our camps, our Pre-Cons which brought young people together? Could it not also be the sense of kinship which developed in the letters from the Children's Page? 

Current Giving 1995



Obituaries

Babcock.—Mildred J. Babcock, 84, of White Cloud, Mich., passed away on August 13, 1995, at the Newaygo County Medical Care Facility in Fremont, Mich., after an illness of several months.

She was born on December 25, 1910, to John and Eva Branch in White Cloud, where she lived all of her life. She married Verne V. Babcock on August 31, 1928. He died in 1985.

Mildred held a variety of jobs in the White Cloud area. The most recent was as a salesperson for Branch Real Estate. Following her retirement, she worked one day a week at the Department of Social Services' "Clothing Closet," helping to collect and distribute used clothing for the needy. She logged nearly 1,500 hours in that volunteer position.

Mildred was a member of the White Cloud Seventh Day Baptist Church for more than 70 years, and was a deaconess for over 50 years. She served her church in many other capacities as well.

Survivors include one son, Earl, of Sparta, Mich.; one daughter, Betty Struble, of Eaton Rapids, Mich.; three grandchildren, and

two great-grandchildren. In addition to her husband, she was preceded in death by an infant daughter, Doris, and one brother, Forrest Branch.

Funeral services were conducted on August 16, 1995, in White Cloud with Rev. Orville W. Babcock officiating. Interment was in the White Cloud Cemetery.

Talbot.—Pansy (Larkin) Talbot, 101, of Battle Creek, Mich., died on August 23, 1995, at her adult foster care home.

She was born on August 7, 1894, in Ord, Neb., the daughter of George L. and May (Bancroft) Larkin. She married Frank A. Talbot in 1915. He died in 1937.

Pansy worked as a teacher in North Loup, Neb., for two years before moving to Battle Creek in 1922. From 1934 to 1972, she operated Talbot's Grocery store in Battle Creek.

Pansy was the oldest member of the Battle Creek Seventh Day Baptist Church, and was active in its Ladies Aid Society and the Charitable Union. Last year, the church held a 100th birthday reception in her honor.

Survivors include one daughter,

Merle Kidder, of Battle Creek; one sister, Fanny Bloem, of Douglas, Wyo.; and one grandson. In addition to her husband, she was preceded in death by one son, Bernard, in 1973; one brother, George H. Larkin, in 1966; and a sister, Mabel Kelso.

Funeral services were conducted by her grandson, David Kidder, on August 26, 1995, in the Royal Funeral Home. Burial was in Memorial Park Cemetery.

Marriages

Russ - Mann.—Lucas Russ and Sharlisa Agustin Mann were united in marriage on August 27, 1994, at the bride's home in Durhamville, NY. Rev. Russell Johnson officiated.

Stamp - Leshar.—Donald Stamp and Marie Leshar were united in marriage on June 16, 1995, in the Verona, NY, Seventh Day Baptist Church. Rev. Steven James officiated.

Births

Williams.—A daughter, Darian Janelle Williams, was born to Kevin and Ann (Lonowski) Williams of Loup City, NE, on June 6, 1995.

Fech.—A daughter, Emily Jessica Fech, was born to John and Jenny (Davis) Fech of Lincoln, NE, on June 26, 1995.

Coote.—A son, Matthew Kip Coote, was born to Clinton and Eurickah Coote of Miami, FL, on August 3, 1995.

Borer.—A son, Benjamin Joseph Borer, was born to Keith and Nora (Dutcher) Borer of Kearney, NE, on August 21, 1995.

Accessions

Santa Barbara, CA
Robert Babcock, pastor
 Joined after baptism
 Amanda Babcock
 Steven Conrad
 Holly Conrad
 Joined after testimony
 Susan Epp
 Joined by letter
 Louise Crump

until their successors are elected at the next Conference in January 2000. The presidents of the six Continental Unions will continue to serve as vice presidents of the world organization. Mrs. Willene Pierce, employed at the BWA headquarters, will continue her position as executive director of the Women's Department.

A "World Reunion of Baptist Women" was held on Monday, July 31, beginning with a two-hour extravaganza of worldwide talent and theme-related messages at the Grand Rex Theatre in Buenos Aires. The audience totaled 3,200, including the 400 national leaders in our group and 700 Baptist women from Brazil. After the program, we marched en masse to the nearby Obelisk for evangelistic music and a short message.

Those involved in the Leadership Conference were treated to a steak dinner at a nearby restaurant and then returned to the theater for the traditional "Folklorica" program. Each Continental Union made a dramatic or musical presentation interspersed with a smorgasbord of music, dance, and drama from many countries.

On Tuesday, we shifted gears from the "small" conference—400 close-knit sisters meeting in our own comfortable hotel—to the larger community of the Baptist World Alliance Congress. This was held on the other side of town in the Municipal Exposition Center, an unheated oversized shed packed with wall-to-wall people. With 5,500 registered for the Congress, we 400 quickly learned to seek out each other's pink ID badges, just for the "treat" of seeing a familiar face!

The Congress officially opened with the traditional Roll Call of Banners wherein some 100 countries were represented by their handcrafted banners. The banners were carried by young Argentines

(rhymes with "valentines") followed by a delegate from each conference. Thanks to Barbara Barber's unrivaled talent, I marched behind *absolutely the most stunning* of the banners and took my place on the stage as 8,000 Baptists sang my favorite hymn, "To God Be the Glory"!

One reason for the standing-room-only crowd that night was the welcoming message from the president of Argentina, Carlos Saul Menem. The government of this predominantly Catholic country had declared the Congress a national event.

I attended a workshop on the Christian Family on Wednesday. On Thursday, I took advantage of a thinned-out crowd and visited the displays, trading literature with some. (I even met someone who knew who our SDB historian is!)

Bernice King, daughter of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr., urged the congregation to "confront racism as an individual obligation" during the Wednesday evening service.

On Thursday evening, the Baptist World Alliance's first human rights award was presented to former U.S. President Jimmy Carter. In a video presentation, Carter said he appreciated the comradeship and mutual support from the BWA.

Friday afternoon featured a Grand Rally for Baptist Women at the Exposition Center. Concurrent men's and youths' rallies were held elsewhere on the premises.

The official BWA business meeting was held on Sabbath. New BWA members were accepted from Rwanda, India, Nepal, Ukraine, and Federated Yugoslavia.

The General Council reported on the resolutions they had adopted. These dealt with fellowship, evangelism, justice, BWA Aid, appreciation to our Argentine hosts, and a tribute to Billy Graham for his 50


years of evangelism. New BWA officers were then introduced and installed. The new president is Nilson Fanini from Brazil; he succeeds Knud Wumpelmann from Denmark. Denton Lotz continues as general secretary.

I was touched by a listing of Christians who had died for their faith since the 1990 BWA Congress in Korea. I regret that I did not count the names, for I had no idea the list would be so long! (Yes, there was one name from the USA.)

Following the business meeting, Dorothy D'Alpuget and I attended the "Friends of BWA Luncheon." It was good to reaffirm the impact of SDB membership in the BWA, and enjoy fellowship and good food with the Australians, North Americans, and Brazilians at our table.

Meanwhile, other Congress attendees were dividing into Love-in-Action groups which went into the community to witness and to share furniture (handcrafted at the Congress), used clothing, and (new!) cloth diapers with neighbors of the Argentine Baptists, and bedding to area hospitals.

On Sunday, we began the sad task of saying good-bye until January 2000 (in Australia) as buses departed for the Buenos Aires Airport. By this time my back was nearly normal, and I was able to enjoy an overnight at Iguassu Falls (1 1/2 times the height of Niagara), a one-hour shopping spree in Paraguay, and two days in Rio de Janeiro before heading home.

I was happy to represent Seventh Day Baptists at the worldwide communion of Baptists and truly appreciate your support, but I was more than ready to come home on Thursday of our own Conference week. On Friday, I received a card from the women gathered in Buckhannon, W. Va. Each name renewed a wave of nostalgia for the intimate fellowship of our own SDB Conference. We truly have something special! 

K E V I N ' S

O R N E R

I just returned from a fantastic pastors' retreat. Other than being in New Hampshire in October (gorgeous!), at a first-class country inn and campground setting (gorgeous!), and having Janet along (gorgeous!), we were able to unwind and learn tons in the process.

One of the biggest lessons learned came from a silly group project.

Playing the role of the Israelites just released from captivity, we needed to find a way across some "alligator-infested" shallow water. (This was before Moses raised his staff.) We had only six strategically placed cinder blocks (stationary rocks), and three long boards to somehow connect the rocks and get to dry land (across the room).

The "natural leaders" in the group stepped right up to take charge. Well, one of them rushed in, lost his balance and was "eaten by the alligators." Two others devised a better way, did most of the groundwork, and forged the way to safe ground.

Then came our turn. I just wanted to get Janet across to safety and be done with it. But "God" (our retreat leader) decided to strike a few people blind. Fortunately, he bypassed my eyes but blindfolded a friend directly in front of me. Ray needed help. I quickly volunteered, asking him if I could lead him.

As we "tight-roped" across the wobbly boards, I literally had his life in my hands. I had to keep checking how he was doing, leading him slowly, step-by-step, by my voice and hands. I needed to be very patient and very deliberate.

At one point, Ray and I were forced to share a cinder block as others moved boards to build the bridge.

Do you know how hard it is to keep your balance when you're blindfolded? And he was not the lightest guy in the crowd. I had to be strong and balanced for both of us.

We finally made our way across to the "promised land." Ray regained his sight, saw who helped him, and we celebrated our victory together.

Our group discussion uncovered many truths and feelings.

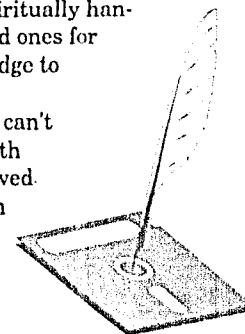
I was so anxious to stroll across, hand-in-hand with Janet, and get it over! Then, a disabled person was placed in our path. I had to let go of Jan (she made it across just fine). But it made me wonder, would I have been as patient if she was the blind person?

Would I have volunteered to help Ray if no one else was around? I mean, if the pathway was clear with just a blind guy standing there, couldn't I have gone on alone? He would never have seen me, right?

But how selfish! Blessed with clear eyesight and a good sense of balance, I was in a position to help one less fortunate.

So many of us have been blessed by the Lord. He has shown us the way to the promised land, blessed us with gifts and strength to help others, but how many of the "blind" do we pass by? It took extra time and effort and deliberate action to help my blind partner—will we do that with the spiritually handicapped? Will we leave our loved ones for a time to assist others on the bridge to safety?

I know the way to salvation. I can't wait to stroll (or rush) across, with Janet and the kids and all my loved ones. But am I concerned enough to help others find the narrow way?



Surprise your favorite Valentine!

For a suggested contribution of \$14 (as in February 14th), you can honor your special someone for Valentine's Day.

Word limit: 25 words or less (or four lines of poetry)

Deadline: December 20, 1995

Let's fill a page in the February SR with tender memories!

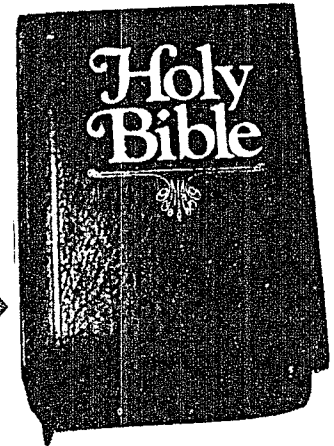
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