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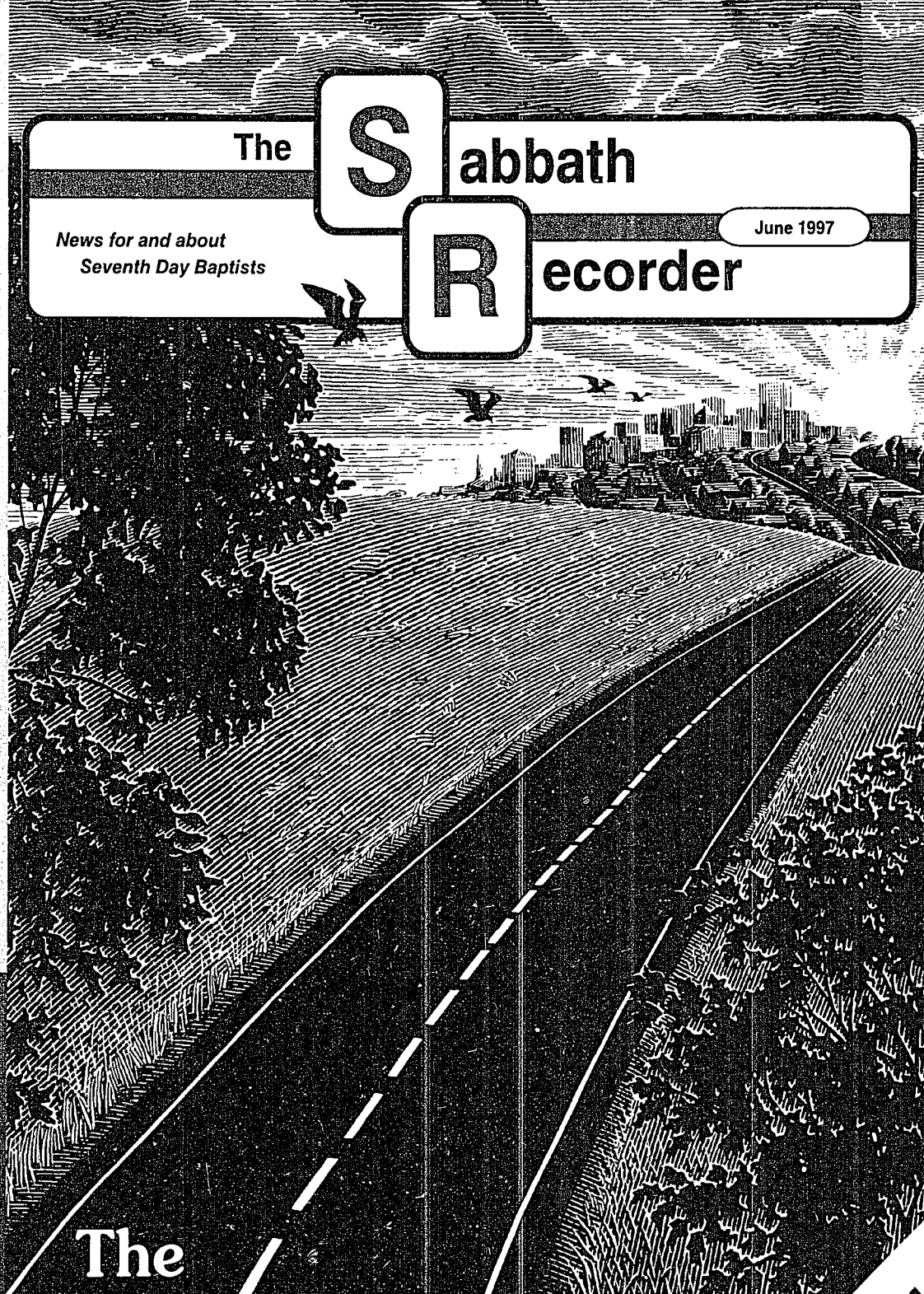
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News for and about
Seventh Day Baptists

June 1997

R

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**The
Crossroads
of an Empty Nest**

Last Issue?
See reply
card!

*"Tuned in,
Turned on, and
Triumphant"*

Come to
General Conference
August 3-9
Lindsborg, Kansas

See the May SR
for registration forms



The SDB Historical Society met at the Center on May 4, 1997. Those attending included (seated, l. to r.): Zora Davis, Paul Green, Jean Davis, Kenneth Davis* (President), and Ruth Burdick*. Standing are Leland Skaggs, Don Sanford* (Historian), Calvin Babcock, John Bevis*, Norma Rudert*, and Tom Merchant*. * = directors.

House for sale in Nortonville, Kan.



This neat cottage is located in Nortonville, Kan., next to the Seventh Day Baptist church. It has three bedrooms, a full basement, central air-conditioning, with an area for a garden in back. This house served as the former parsonage.

It is located four blocks from uptown, and four blocks from the new elementary school. The lot is approximately 75 feet by 150 feet. Price: \$48,000. The money will go toward improvements on the church's parish house, which will become the parsonage. If interested, contact:

Charles Wheeler
Box 353
Nortonville, KS 66060
Phone: (913) 886-3616

To the dear friends of Muriel Osborn,

Thank you for your prayers, cards, calls, and words of encouragement through Mom's last weeks on earth.

The outpouring of love expressed to her was overwhelming. And while I would like to thank each of you personally, I find myself unable to complete that task. We were praying for peace and comfort for her, and God certainly answered that prayer.

Thank you again for all you did.
Love in Christ,
Karen (Osborn) Payne

May "Pearls" Correction

In the column on Milton College Legacy, it was incorrectly stated that the New Milton College Alumni Association took title to Old Main Hall. Since the Alumni Association has a limited membership with no new members being added, the Main Hall Preservation Society (MHPS) was incorporated to "hold the deed and has sole ownership, restoring the building and protecting college history."

Any contributions can be made to MHPS or to the Seventh Day Baptist Historical Society for the specific purpose of the SDB heritage room.

The Sabbath Recorder



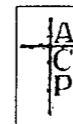
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Who are Seventh Day Baptists?

If you've never read *The Sabbath Recorder* before, you might be wondering who Seventh Day Baptists are. Like other Baptists, we believe in:

- the saving love of Jesus Christ.
- the Bible as the inspired word of God and a record of God's will for man. The Bible is our authority both for our faith and our daily conduct.
- freedom of thought under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- the congregational form of church government. Every member of the church has the right to participate in the decision making process of the church.

The seventh day

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

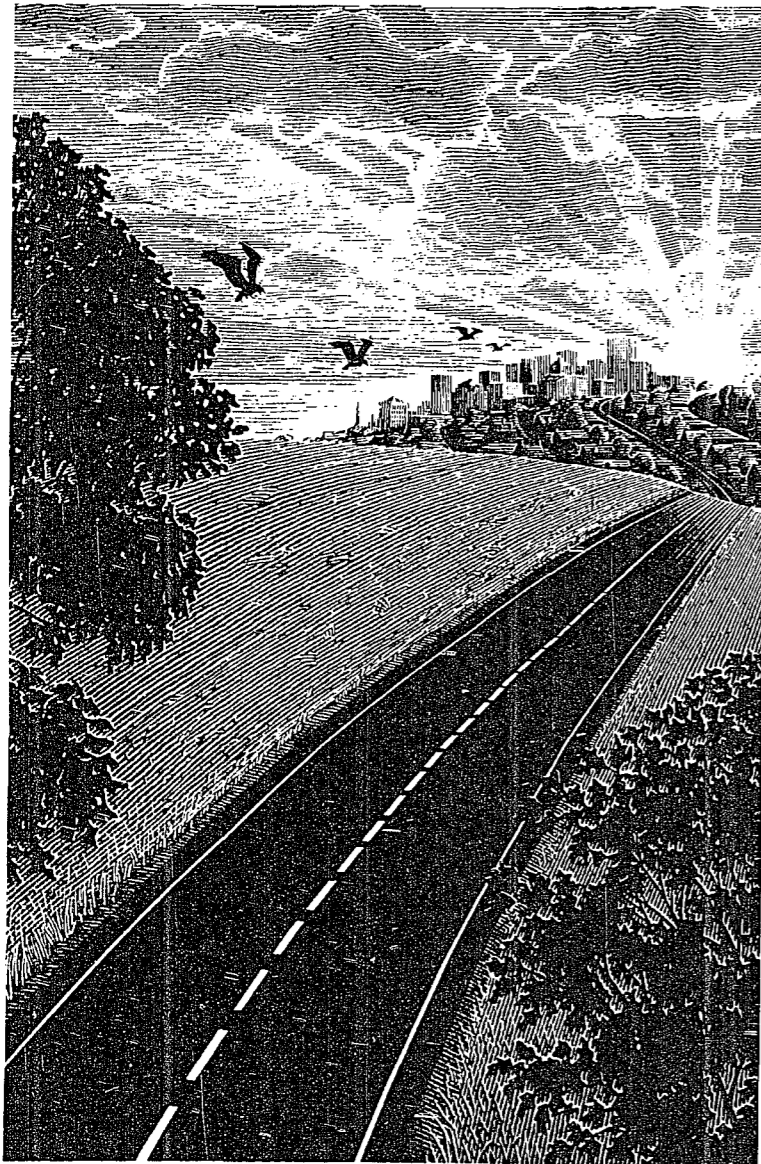
It is the joy of the Sabbath that makes SDBs just a little bit different. If you would like more information, write: Seventh Day Baptist Center, 3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678. Phone (608) 752-5055; FAX (608) 752-7711; E-mail: sdbgen@inwave.com

The crossroads of an empty nest

by Norman and Victoria Burdick

Editor's Note: The following is a condensed version of a morning Bible study presented by Norman and Vicki Burdick at General Conference last year. The main text was written by Norm, and the dated journal entries were written by Vicki.

Their daughter, Erin, 22, is completing her M.A. at Syracuse University in New York, and Jeremy, 21, is a senior at Humboldt State University near Eureka, Calif.



As Vicki and I reflect on the last 22 years that God has blessed our lives with children, it is hard to understand that that short span of time has come and gone in the blink of an eye.

I know that we are not alone in this understanding. All who have been blessed with children and loved ones know that suddenly—blink—they are gone.

So, "blink, blink," here we are with the empty nest and a whole host of feelings and emotions that we spent so easily during the years that our children were under our love, care, and protection.

January 23, 1992

I'm up in the middle of the night looking at a computer screen through tear-clouded eyes.

My chest is tight, and I can't stop the tears.

Her dad and I have "cried a river" since she and her brother were born: at their births, at Christmas plays, when they've been away visiting their grandparents during the summer, as we've opened gifts that were made by their own hands, when we've been scared for them, missed them, or been so proud of them that you would have thought that there had never been children made so perfectly. But I've never experienced such a conflicting pain as this.

It's finally sinking in that my oldest child, my firstborn, my friend, is going far away to college.

I know that this doesn't compare to our friends and family who have recently lost

their children forever. But suddenly it hurts so much.

I've decided to write this as a way to help me through this change in my life.

August 22, 1994

Jeremy, I can already tell that this transition will be just as traumatic as Erin's. Oh, Lord Jesus, why can't there be a smooth "growing" into adulthood?

I thought that having you at home while you went to college would be easier and that my heart wouldn't be broken. You're pushing the edge of the envelope, and I'm not sure that your dad and I can last till you reach Mach one.

Please take the very best care of yourself that you can because we can't watch over you as we have in the past. You are so precious to us, and we love watching you mature into a man of God.

Hitting the crossroads

As we begin to examine this inevitable experience, it seems that the best place to start is with the best example of all: Jesus our Savior.

In Luke 2:41-51, we find Jesus traveling with his parents to Jerusalem at the tender age of 12. Suddenly, on the return trip home, Jesus' parents discovered that he was not with them. When they did not find him, they turned back and searched for three days.

As we read on in the Scripture, little is said about the emotion, trauma, fear, and worry that Mary and Joseph were experiencing. Now you and I know that Mary was probably as frantic as a mother can get when her child is missing. Joseph was there with her,

the adrenaline welling up in their chests, running, searching, and crying out to God for their lost son.

At last he was found, safe. When asked why he caused this commotion, he answered, "Don't you know I must be about my father's business?" Mary and Joseph were amazed at the knowledge and wisdom that our Savior displayed at such a young age.

The parents of Jesus did not understand the reply, but Mary treasured all that had happened and all that had been said. "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man."

From this brief reading of the Scriptures, we can see that even Jesus, and the parents of Jesus, had a transition and departure of a loved child. We are not alone.

Every day, loved ones leave "nests" to attend college, to join the armed forces, to start employment, to get married, or for any number of reasons.

As this happens, the world is turned upside down for some. Or at least turned sideways for others. As Vicki and I reflect on our "empty

that God has for us to understand in His Word?

Departure of a loved one Fear and worry

The best and highest honor and duty we have is to educate our children and loved ones in the Scriptures. This education should start at the earliest of ages and must continue. In equipping our loved ones with a Biblical education, we are preparing them for whatever the world holds in store for them.

Proverbs 22:6 tells us to "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." What a wonderful relief it will be to see our loved ones ready for the future with the Scriptures deep within their hearts.

The Scriptures also tell us that Jesus loves all of his children. Mark 10:13-16 shows us how young children were brought to Jesus, how he enveloped them with his loving arms, and how he blessed them. Jesus will be right there when needed if we have embedded the love of Jesus and the Scriptures within our children's hearts.

Three distinct divisions involved in the transition will meet at the crossroads of an empty nest: Departure of a loved one, Transition, and Recovery to a new life style.

nest," there come to mind three separate and distinct divisions involved in the transition we meet at the crossroads of an empty nest: Departure of a loved one, Transition, and Recovery to a new life style.

Although we found plenty of reading material on the subject, the most sound information about the empty nest can be found in your own holy Bible. What is it

The Apostle John wrote of his spiritual children in 3 John, verse 4, and of his pleasure with them. He said, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." What great joy to see our loved ones walking in the truth of the Lord.

Fear and worry disappear when we know that the Lord will lead and guide through the knowledge and love of His Scriptures.

Loneliness

Certainly loneliness—ours and our children's—in the departure process is a large part of the personal drama.

Often we hear of homesickness and unhappiness on the part of children who have departed. We would be remiss not to recognize that loneliness is a problem to be dealt with on both sides.

Again the Bible gives comfort and strength to overcome the problem of loneliness. Psalm 121 tells of the ultimate source of strength, and places us within the stronghold and protection of the Lord. With this strength, all loneliness flees. 1 John 4:4 tells us that greater is the Lord within us than he that is in the world. Loneliness is defeated when we know that Jesus Christ is at our side at all times.

Change

Two of our favorite verses, Proverbs 3:5-6, give the answer to dealing with the change that comes with the empty nest: the quiet house, the change in responsibilities, the room that no one sleeps in. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he will direct thy paths."

The sections of this Conference Bible study were separated by musical selections. If you'd like a little more reality, play the following for reading background music:

- "Parents' Prayer" by Greg Davis
- "Letting Go" by Suzy Bogguss
- "Watercolored Ponies" by Wayne Watson
- "Bible and a Bus Ticket Home" by Collin Raye

The texts that the Burdicks used were:

- The Bible
- *Life on the Edge* by Dr. James Dobson
- *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* by Dr. Seuss

February 18, 1992

How do you let go of a person who has been at least one-fourth of your life for 18 years? On one hand, I'm ecstatic to see that the person she's become feels confident and independent enough to move 2,700 miles away from her immediate family. On the other, I can't figure out why her father and I thought that it was important for our children to feel so autonomous.

We've spent the last 18 years preparing our progeny for the world, at the same time that we were protecting them from the harsh realities of it.

February 27, 1996

Son, I don't know why you have to move into an apartment, but I do know that I don't like it. Just explain to me why you can't stay here with Dad and me while you finish your sophomore year. Why do you have to hurry life? How can I tell you that you have all the time in the world? Life will not pass you by, so please just slow down and enjoy your college years.

Transition Tolerance

Tolerance is not one of our favorite words. In fact, many people avoid the subject of tolerance as much as possible. We remember the night that Jeremy, our son, declared his independence in a non-verbal fashion.

In equipping our loved ones with a Biblical education, we are preparing them for whatever the world holds in store for them.

Jeremy had been away for the summer in Summer Christian Service Corps (SCSC) and had returned home after that experience. He left the house one Sunday afternoon at 2:00 p.m., indicating that he was going to take his girlfriend to a restaurant for some tacos. It was 4 o'clock the next morning when he arrived home, with no phone calls or indication where he had been.

We certainly don't accept this type of behavior, but we realized that this was Jeremy's "declaration of independence" from us. Even though it was non-verbal, there was no doubt that the declaration had been made. It was during this transition period that we learned tolerance.

Matthew 11:28 gave us the comfort that we needed to be tolerant. That Scripture says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Jeremy probably wouldn't

agree that we were very tolerant during this period of transition. However, we can tell you that the stress level would have reached a red-hot level if we had not received the message that the Scriptures gave us to come unto Jesus.

Acceptance

The second part of the transition that occurs is one of accepting the departure of the loved one. If we have educated our children in the Word of the Lord, we can better accept their departure knowing in our hearts that God will go with them to the farthest reaches of the earth, and into places that angels would not dare to tread.

In Joshua 24:15, we see Joshua making the declaration that we would want our son or daughter to make. How much easier our acceptance of the empty nest will be if those wonderful gifts from God declare with Joshua, "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

God Himself tolerated and accepted the giving of His son to save us from our sins. When you have a chance, revisit the wonderful Scripture found at John 3:16-17. God Himself entered and survived the crossroads of an empty nest out of love for us.

May 2, 1992

So many times during this year of "Senioritis" we've heard the phrase, "This is the last time I'll be doing this."

The last play at school, youth church service, water polo game, and the last birthday spent at home. Now we're preparing for the last Mother-Daughter Tea, Drama Banquet, swim meet, and who knows what else we'll come up against.

The rest of the family jokes

about not using the "L" or "G" words around Mom. But suddenly "leave" and "go" are not my favorite action verbs. We tease about the next four years being an extended "visit" to New Jersey. But suddenly, it sounds like a foreign country.

Our daughter's making plans for a career that will never center around our community in California. She will always be welcomed in her birth home, but I know that when she comes, it will be for a visit, or as a resting place from that frantic world out there. Maybe we'll be her haven or a place to heal.



June 2, 1996

What is the attraction of going so far away to college? We have one child on the other side of the continent, and now you are off to the other end of the state. It seems that you are both comfortable with your indepen-

dence, and that your learning experiences need to take place in other cities.

Enjoy your year in the forest, son. You've got nine months of rain, sleet, cold, and the clearest air to be found in California. When you walk out your back door, you're on a hiking trail, and the view from your front door is the Pacific Ocean. You are blessed!

Recovery to a new life style Service

This new empty house you find yourself in, and this large and empty hole left in your life, now need to be filled. Fill this house and hole with service—service to God, family, church, community, and to others.

1 Peter 4:10 challenges all of us to minister to one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. What better way to fill our empty nest than with a life of service and ministry? The world is full of people and work to be done for the glory of God.

Fruits of the Spirit

Again we are challenged by the Scriptures when we read of the fruits of the Spirit. Galatians 5:16, 22-25 tell us to walk in the Spirit, and we shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. Fill your lives "after children" with not only the service mentioned above, but also with the Spirit of God.

In doing so, the fruits of the Spirit will be ours to claim. Your life will be full of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.

Blessings

May the Lord richly bless you as you find yourselves at this crossroads of life. Romans 8:31-32 tell

us, "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things."

Fill this house and hole with service—service to God, family, church, community, and to others.

The Lord has indeed richly blessed us with the greatest and most wonderful of gifts, the gift of the lives of our children. We, the parents blessed by God, can thank and serve Him by preparing our children with an education in the Word of God, and in guiding them into the world with a set of God's values.

May 30, 1996

Well, Jeremy, you've given us a new experience. We're to have a daughter-in-law, and we couldn't have done a better job of choosing a life-partner for you. All that we've ever wanted for Erin and you is that you're loved, fulfilled, and content.

Your father and I have prayed for your future mates since you were both conceived: that they are being raised by Christian parents, are being protected, loved unconditionally, and nurtured to grow strong and wise in God's plan.

We praise the Lord that you've found your partner, that she loves God and thinks that you're pretty wonderful.



June 12, 1992

What I've begun to center on are all of the "firsts" with our daughter.

Last summer we began with our first interview at colleges and universities across the U.S. Now we've experienced our first scholarship petition; rejection and acceptance. The application forms were filled out and sent to several universities, both near and far.

It's always a parent's prayer that others accept your child as their family does. Unconditionally. And it's awesome that she was affirmed by all that she applied to. But why does the school of her choice have to be so far away?

The reason that this all hit suddenly and with such force is because I've experienced another first.

As I stood at the mailbox in front of our community post office, I reflected on the three envelopes that I held in my hand. All three were to the same campus. One, green, held the tuition deposit. A white one, the dorm deposit. And the last green one, her acceptance of their scholarship.

By sending these off, her father and I were agreeing that, for at least the next four years, we would trust this bastion of higher learning with the nurturing and protection of our firstborn.

In that instant, I determined that although we'd always professed that both of our children were a gift, on loan from God, that we had been allowed to care for, we would now truly relinquish our position as her caretakers.

We'll be available as sounding boards and wailing walls, but the choices will be hers to make. And with these decisions come the ramifications. Welcome to the adult world, daughter.

World! You have no idea what we are about to unleash upon you! Please take care of her and don't let the lessons that she's about to learn be too harsh or break her. She thinks that you are her oyster, and she's gone out in search of her pearl. *SR*

Norman and Vicki Burdick are members of the Riverside, Calif., SDB Church.

Empty yet occupied

by Camille Henry

Throughout their school years, we taught, molded, disciplined, and praised each of our three children. Each child brought new and different challenges, but always rewards in the end.

Now, after 22 years of raising children, we will soon no longer have minor children for whom we are responsible.

During the past four years, we have been in the process of emptying the nest, but in a very different way than most would think.

In 1993, Tanya went off to college. We said our good-byes through tears as we dropped her off at Bethel College in Minneapolis. After an enjoyable year away, Tanya decided she would move back home and attend the state university to avoid excessive debts for her education. (A very smart decision on her part, as well as a sacrificial one.)

So, after having said good-bye to our eldest, and having adjusted to her empty bedroom, she returned!

Erik, who graduated in 1995 from high school, had already decided he would live at home and attend the state university. However, he also spent three summers

away from home permanently before the others.

As a mom who has thoroughly enjoyed having her children around her, I can say that the "empty nest"

It's not easy when the nest is almost empty, but occupied. I have to be reminded from time to time that I have reverted to being "mommy" again.

away from home touring with the Stained Glass singing group, giving us a taste of his absence.

Erik was married on May 24th, and he and Mandy are temporarily living with us in order to complete college. I feel exceptionally blessed that Mandy feels comfortable enough to make our home her home.

Eddie will graduate from high school this June and enter the Air Force in July. Our baby (he'll never forgive me for that one!) will actu-

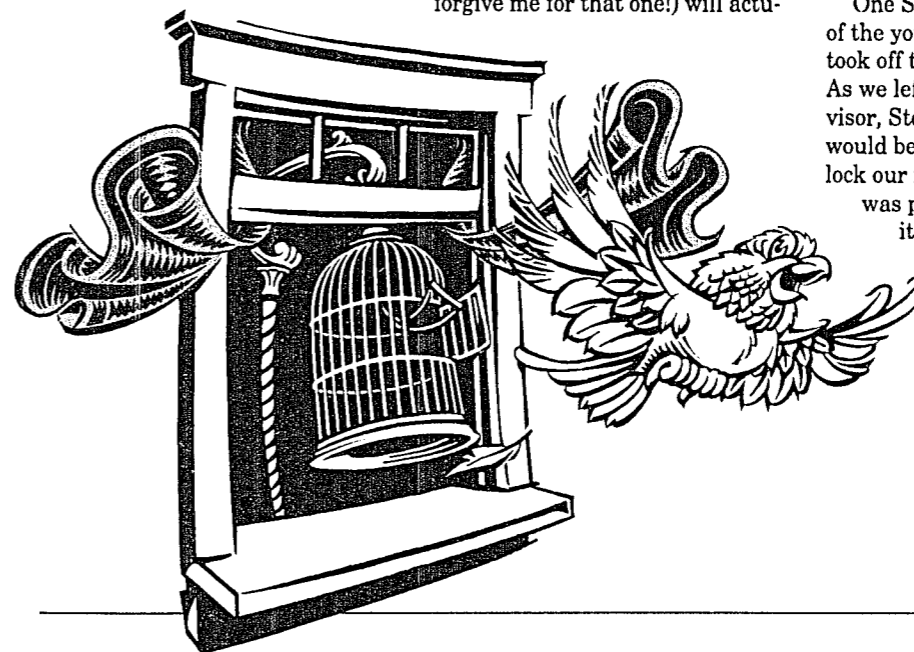
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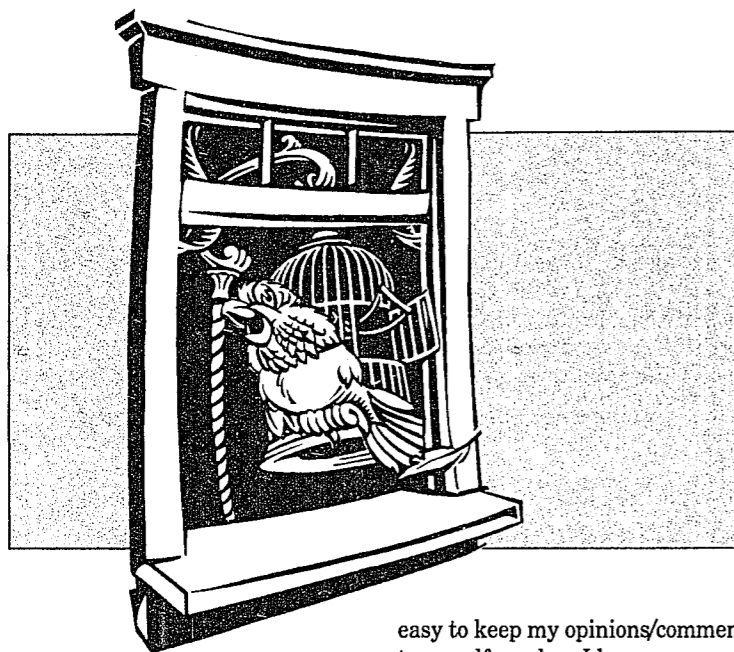
I have always treasured the hours our family spent in conversation, debating various issues— theological, political, or sociological. Our house was always the center of activity for the kids and their friends from school and church.

Nearly every weekend, our home jiggled with laughter, screaming, wrestling, and music as the kids enjoyed just being able to "hang."

One Saturday evening, a bunch of the youth (Rod and I included) took off to watch Eddie wrestle. As we left, our church youth advisor, Steve Osborn, thought he would be a responsible leader and lock our front door for us. (That was probably the only time it was ever locked!)

One of Erik's friends from school had asked if he could come over and use our computer for an assignment that night. So, expecting to be able to walk right in, his "chauffeur" dropped him off and left. To his dismay, the





door was locked, he had no way home, and no way into our house. And the temperature was about 30 degrees outside!

When we arrived home later that evening, we found him bundled up in a ball on the porch, waiting for us to return. Yes, our house has always been open to "the kids."

Now, the group at the house has changed. They're still kids, but they are the new Youth Fellowship kids from the church, who hang out with their advisors, Tanya and Erik.

So, where is this empty nest experience? It has been an exciting transition time for us. As parents who have always wanted to be a part of our children's lives, we have had to learn to provide "space." Our empty nest is being experienced within the ongoing relationships in our home.

As our children have become adults, we have had to relate to them on a very different level. We have had to allow a certain separation to take place while they are still present physically.

As each one has approached this "day of independence," they have looked forward to being free from Mom and Dad looking over their shoulders. But, after 22 years of child rearing, I have not found it

easy to keep my opinions/comments to myself—unless I have a very good reason not to. In a sense, it is more difficult to witness this fledgling adulthood firsthand than to push them out of the nest and tell them to "fly."

Throughout our years of child rearing, I have clung to one passage of Scripture which provides a wonderful promise. Proverbs 22:6 reads, "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it" (NIV).

Had it not been for this verse, I certainly would have thought twice about having children. But through this verse, God provided comfort for me when I felt so inadequate.

Over the years, we have laughed at the funny ways they pronounced new words; cried over serious, life-threatening illness; experienced pride in their achievements in school; cried tears of praise to God as each one came to know Christ; struggled and shed painful tears through the teenage years; and found pure joy in watching each one come full circle and fulfill the promise God first gave me.

Now, as I watch each one make their own decisions and learn from their mistakes, I still cling to that promise.

It's not easy when the nest is almost empty, but occupied. I have to

be reminded from time to time that I have reverted to being "mommy" again. And when I do, I have to ask forgiveness and be willing to allow the nest to be empty while still occupied.

I feel privileged to have children who feel comfortable staying at home for a time. In fact, I feel I am getting some of the best years of their lives. I am able to watch them function as mature adults, ready to accept responsibility for their work, ministry, and school.

Even as Eddie prepares to leave for the Air Force, I have joy in watching him mature as he takes the necessary steps toward that goal. The feelings are very mixed— anxiety, fear for his safety, confidence in God's workings in his life, and joy as he expresses assurance that this is what he wants to do.

Will I shed some tears? Most likely a flood of them! But Proverbs 22 once again provides the assurance I need to watch him go.

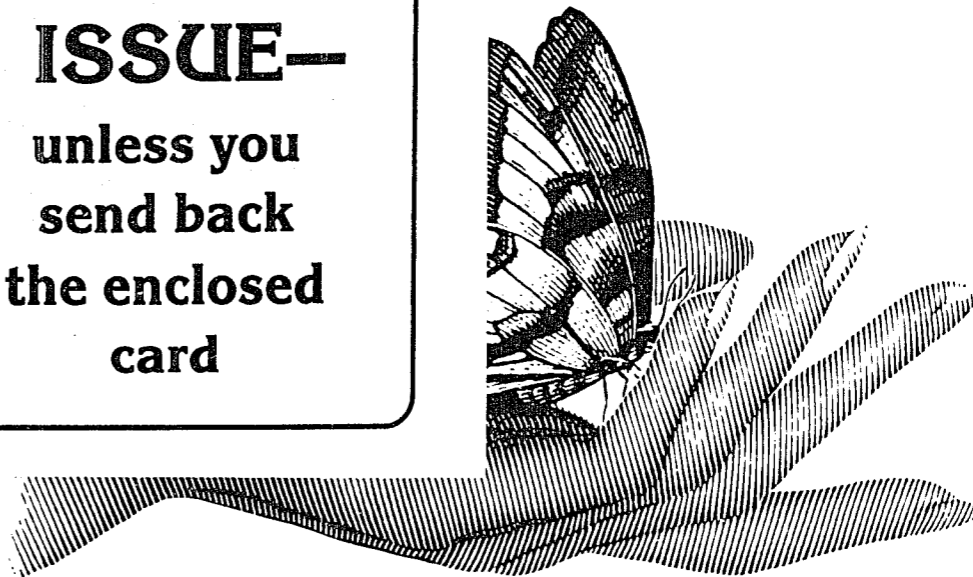
As I look ahead to the next few years, I know there will come a time when the nest will be unoccupied as well as empty. I can't even imagine what my feelings will be then. But for now, I am content to live in the tension between "mommy" and "mother."

I look forward to the day when our home will once again be occupied—with grandchildren to dirty my dishes, leave the cupboard doors open, all the lights on, and never close the garage door.

Children are a treasure from the Lord, one we are to invest in. Our return on our investment comes when they have families of their own who love and serve the Lord. Yes, "train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." *SR*

Camille Henry is a registered nurse and member of the Milton, Wis., SDB Church. She and husband Rodney served as SDB missionaries to the Philippines from 1979 to 1985.

This is your
**LAST
ISSUE—**
unless you
send back
the enclosed
card



It was Thursday morning at Conference 1996. Norm and Vicki Burdick were leading an insightful Bible study on letting go of your kids.

In the back of the room sat a "fortysomething" mother, clutching three soggy tissues and blubbering away. Her 18-year-old son was just 24 days short of embarking into his own life via the U.S. Air Force. To add insult to injury, half of those days would be spent away from "the nest" since he planned to remain on the West Coast after Conference.

Like Vicki Burdick and like Jesus' mother Mary, she pondered images in her heart:

- The newborn eyes searching the hospital room for those of his mother.
- The toddler with his little arm around his new sister's shoulder, saying, "I wub her."

- The kindergartner clutching Dad's Roy Rogers lunch box (an antique!) as the giant yellow school bus swallowed him for the first time.

- The fourth grader on the first day of school asking, "Dad, when we become a Christian, aren't we supposed to do what Jesus did?... Well, Jesus never went to school."

- The 14-year-old, hurt and angry over Mom's cancer but volunteering to drive her for a treatment despite the legal ramifications.

- The graduate-to-be investing his savings in a 1972 Buick Skylark and assuring Mom that it was an awesome car and "perfectly safe at any speed."

Her reverie was interrupted. A bearded young man approached,

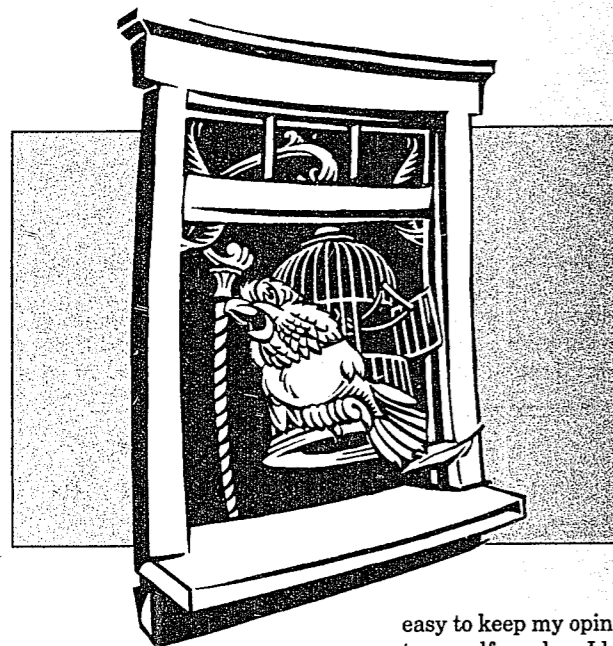
sat down next to her, and invited her to walk to a restaurant for lunch and "a chat." In his youthful optimism and physical prowess, he understated the distance, the terrain, and the heat index, but eventually they made it.

They ordered, talked of the family, Summer Christian Service Corps, young adult concerns, and dessert. The time was precious as she knew he would soon be "chowing down" strange food in the company of strange people who would not wait for him.

"I'm not ready for this!" she screamed inwardly, "and he can't be, either!"

Then her grown-up son picked up the check. *SR*

Donna Bond is president of the SDB Women's Society and member of the Shiloh, N.J., SDB Church.



If you want your name removed from our mailing list, do NOTHING, and within four to six weeks, your name will be deleted. You will no longer receive *The Sabbath Recorder*.

door was locked, he had no way home, and no way into our house. And the temperature was about 30 degrees outside!

When we arrived home later that evening, we found him bundled up in a ball on the porch, waiting for us to return. Yes, our house has always been open to "the kids."

Now, the group at the house has changed. They're still kids, but they are the new Youth Fellowship kids from the church, who hang out with their advisors, Tanya and Erik.

So, where is this empty nest experience? It has been an exciting transition time for us. As parents who have always wanted to be a part of our children's lives, we have had to learn to provide "space." Our empty nest is being experienced within the ongoing relationships in our home.

As our children have become adults, we have had to relate to them on a very different level. We have had to allow a certain separation to take place while they are still present physically.

As each one has approached this "day of independence," they have looked forward to being free from Mom and Dad looking over their shoulders. But, after 22 years of child rearing, I have not found it

easy to keep my opinion to myself—unless I have good reason not to. In a sense, it is more difficult to witness this fledgling adulthood firsthand than to push them out of the nest and tell them to "fly."

Throughout our years of child rearing, I have clung to one passage of Scripture which provides a wonderful promise. Proverbs 22:6 reads, "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it" (NIV).

Had it not been for this verse, I certainly would have thought twice about having children. But through this verse, God provided comfort for me when I felt so inadequate.

Over the years, we have laughed at the funny ways they pronounced new words; cried over serious, life-threatening illness; experienced pride in their achievements in school; cried tears of praise to God as each one came to know Christ; struggled and shed painful tears through the teenage years; and found pure joy in watching each one come full circle and fulfill the promise God first gave me.

Now, as I watch each one make their own decisions and learn from their mistakes, I still cling to that promise.

It's not easy when the nest is almost empty, but occupied. I have to

that this is what he wants to do.

Will I shed some tears? Most likely a flood of them! But Proverbs 22 once again provides the assurance I need to watch him go.

As I look ahead to the next few years, I know there will come a time when the nest will be unoccupied as well as empty. I can't even imagine what my feelings will be then. But for now, I am content to live in the tension between "mommy" and "mother."

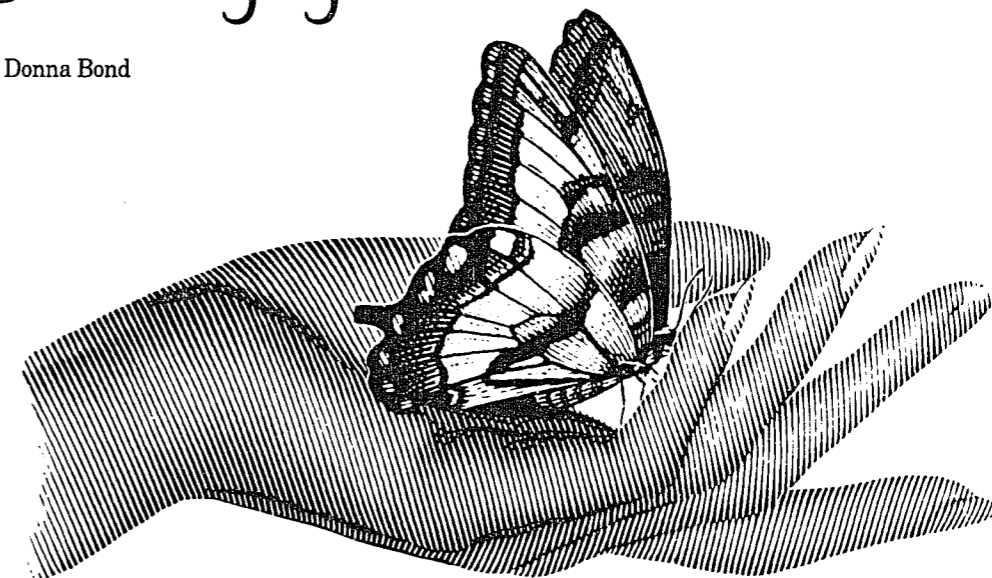
I look forward to the day when our home will once again be occupied—with grandchildren to dirty my dishes, leave the cupboard doors open, all the lights on, and never close the garage door.

Children are a treasure from the Lord, one we are to invest in. Our return on our investment comes when they have families of their own who love and serve the Lord. Yes, "train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." *SR*

Camille Henry is a registered nurse and member of the Milton, Wis., SDB Church. She and husband Rodney served as SDB missionaries to the Philippines from 1979 to 1985.

Letting go...

by Donna Bond



It was Thursday morning at Conference 1996. Norm and Vicki Burdick were leading an insightful Bible study on letting go of your kids.

In the back of the room sat a "fortysomething" mother, clutching three soggy tissues and blubbering away. Her 18-year-old son was just 24 days short of embarking into his own life via the U.S. Air Force. To add insult to injury, half of those days would be spent away from "the nest" since he planned to remain on the West Coast after Conference.

Like Vicki Burdick and like Jesus' mother Mary, she pondered images in her heart:

- The newborn eyes searching the hospital room for those of his mother.
- The toddler with his little arm around his new sister's shoulder, saying, "I wub her."

- The kindergartner clutching Dad's Roy Rogers lunch box (an antique!) as the giant yellow school bus swallowed him for the first time.

- The fourth grader on the first day of school asking, "Dad, when we become a Christian, aren't we supposed to do what Jesus did?... Well, Jesus never went to school."

- The 14-year-old, hurt and angry over Mom's cancer but volunteering to drive her for a treatment despite the legal ramifications.

- The graduate-to-be investing his savings in a 1972 Buick Skylark and assuring Mom that it was an awesome car and "perfectly safe at any speed."

Her reverie was interrupted. A bearded young man approached,

sat down next to her, and invited her to walk to a restaurant for lunch and "a chat." In his youthful optimism and physical prowess, he understated the distance, the terrain, and the heat index, but eventually they made it.

They ordered, talked of the family, Summer Christian Service Corps, young adult concerns, and dessert. The time was precious as she knew he would soon be "chowing down" strange food in the company of strange people who would not wait for him.

"I'm not ready for this!" she screamed inwardly, "and he can't be, either!"

Then her grown-up son picked up the check. *SR*

Donna Bond is president of the SDB Women's Society and member of the Shiloh, N.J., SDB Church.

Hollywood's anti-Christian bias

by Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein

Parental concerns over the levels of sex, violence, and profanity on television has led the entertainment industry to introduce a controversial new TV rating system. Unfortunately, the public debate over program content has not extended to another troubling aspect of our popular entertainment: Hollywood's increasing antipathy toward religious faith in general and to Christianity in particular.

Is Hollywood hostile to institutional religion? To faith? To Christianity? If so, why? These questions

often cite the highly controversial movie *The Last Temptation of Christ*, a 1986 release that took cinematic irreverence and iconoclasm to new heights. But Hollywood's portrayals of religious figures have worsened over the last decade.

How else do we explain the fact that Christian clergy—when they are portrayed at all—are usually shown engaging in morally reprehensible behavior? Or the fact that Christian symbols are associated with characters who prey upon so-

dice on screen is a relatively recent phenomenon. It wasn't until the late 1960s that positive portrayals became an endangered species. Contrast, for example, the nun played by Julie Andrews in *The Sound of Music* in 1965 and the nuns in 1985's *Agnes of God*, in which a pregnant nun murders her own infant child.

One can't help but wonder if this shift could have been averted if Christian groups were as well-organized as the Jewish community. Could Hollywood producers ridicule and malign Christians with impunity if the Christian community organized its own equivalent of the Anti-Defamation League?

Can this situation be changed? It will take a great deal of effort since Hollywood is determined to produce such films despite their financial track record. Not surprisingly, most of the movies referenced above have been box office flops.

We must hold Hollywood accountable for their "product." Just as tobacco companies are expected to make money without enticing the young, and chemical plants are expected to turn a profit without polluting the environment, so filmmakers must assume responsibility for that which they produce. They must recognize that their harmful and egregious depictions of religion and faithful Christians are as damaging to our popular culture as drugs are to the body and pollutants are to the environment.

Hollywood can and should do better. We should demand it. SR

Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein is the president of the Center for Jewish and Christian Values in Washington, D.C., from which this editorial originated.

Christian beliefs and symbols are often belittled by Hollywood producers and writers. Clergy are portrayed as hypocrites—or worse. The cherished symbols of their faith are put to blasphemous uses.

demand careful analysis, for Hollywood's impact on our popular culture is profound and undeniable. A brief review of films with religious characters reveals that this impact is largely negative.

Hollywood's defenders point to recent films such as *The Preacher's Wife* and *Dead Man Walking* in their efforts to deny this hostility. But these are merely the exceptions that prove the rule. More often than not, filmmakers seem to go out of their way to depict people of faith in the worst possible light. And while Jews and Judaism are, by and large, portrayed favorably and reverentially, Christians, particularly Evangelical Protestants and devout Catholics, do not fare so well.

One is left with the distinct impression that Hollywood has a very real and pervasive anti-Christian bias. Critics of the film industry

ciety? Or that the crimes of various antagonists are shown to be religiously motivated?

Sadly, anti-Christian films—such as *Primal Fear*, *Priest*, *Misery*, *Eye for an Eye*, *Copycat*, the *Cape Fear* remake, *Seven*, and *Johnny Mnemonic*—represent the norm among films being released by Hollywood today. The near total absence of films with positive Christian characters provides clear evidence of anti-Christian bias on the part of many filmmakers.

Christian beliefs and symbols are often belittled by Hollywood producers and writers. Clergy are portrayed as hypocrites—or worse. The cherished symbols of their faith are put to blasphemous uses. Indeed, if there is a Christian character in a film, he is usually depicted as a fool, a liar, a cheater, a diabolical murderer, or a crazy person.

The manifestation of such preju-



Women's Society page by Charlotte Chroniger

Clean the inside first

"...first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean also" (Matthew 23:26 NASB). Read all of Matthew 23 for the rest of the story.

Recently we held a cleaning day at our church. Several men worked on the outside drainpipes, while others did yard work. Several women cleaned the cupboards in the kitchen, while others wiped windows, vacuumed carpets, and washed walls and curtains. Everything smelled and looked so clean!

The next day, two of us returned to the church to tackle another project—cleaning closets and storage rooms.

One particular storage room took some time. We sorted out those things which had fallen apart or rotted and needed to be discarded, from those things which were still usable.

Another closet held some interesting items, which caused us to ask, "What is this for? Do we need to keep this?"

After getting some needed advice from our head trustee, we were able to organize the closet so it could be used efficiently. We even left some shelves empty for storing other things that we use regularly.

As Christians, we often take time to look clean on the outside. We shower or bathe, brush our teeth, put on clean clothes, comb our hair. We want to look nice to others. But perhaps there are inner closets or storage rooms in our hearts and minds that really need a good cleaning.

Are there some habits that have rotted our testimony for Christ? Is there bitterness or anger in our hearts that has caused a broken relationship?

Do we need to organize our personal lives, discarding the worthless things we do or say, and fill our lives with things of value in

God's eyes—prayer, Bible reading, worship, forgiveness?

Do we need to seek out the advice of another Christian who can be objective in his or her observations of our testimony and life, and help us evaluate our lives so that we can make changes?

Do we need to ask the Lord to fill the empty spaces in our lives with His thoughts, His desires, His love and forgiveness?

Spring cleaning is fun and worthwhile, and it gives me a sense of accomplishment. But I have to do it again and again, year after year.

I also need to clean up my life on a regular basis. I need to again and again ask God to forgive me, to help me get rid of anger or bitterness, to fill me with His love and peace.

Again and again I need to ask the Lord to keep me focused on His perfect will for me, to give me strength and wisdom to continually evaluate my spiritual life from His perspective. This "cleaning" will go on until the day I die and meet the Lord in heaven. Then He will make me perfectly clean for eternity.

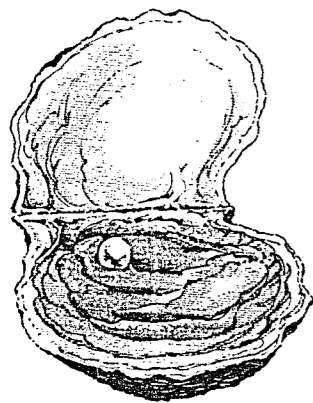
Until Jesus comes, we have a responsibility to serve Him and His people. We will be talking about how we as SDB women can serve Him and each other during our Conference sessions in August.

Please join us at the Women's Board Business Meeting luncheon, at the Women's Banquet, at the Women's Interest Committee, at the SCSC Craft Table (don't forget your crafts to sell), at the SCSC program, and at all the other opportunities to encourage each other, pray for one another, share with one another.

We're looking forward to seeing many of you in Kansas. Have a safe trip! SR



Perhaps there are inner closets or storage rooms in our hearts and minds that really need a good cleaning.



Pearls from the Past by Don A. Sanford, historian

A stand for the Sabbath

enth Day Baptists. We are now on our way to Oberlin because we have confidence in that College above all others; and our confidence is mostly based upon the reputed and high religious character and liberalities of sentiments.

"But we are going there to be true Sabbath-keepers if we stay, and to be known and treated as such. In no respect and not in the smallest degree are our religious convictions, or our faith or practice to be hidden or concealed or in any way compromised.

"We are to live there, if we enter College, as conscientious Seventh Day Baptists, humbly we hope, but openly; and I propose

there either agreeable or profitable. Now the quicker we learn as to that the better for us, so I propose we ride out to-day."

That plan of action was agreed upon, fare was paid, and passage was taken on a big four-horse coach for Elyria and Oberlin. Mr. Allen rode on the top of the coach by the side of the driver, and thus they rode into Oberlin on Sunday.

The next day they applied for entrance into the college. As was expected, the first question asked was: "When did you come into town?"

Jonathan Allen calmly replied. "Yesterday."

"But did you not know that the rules of the College strictly forbid

The Sabbath Recorder for March 30, 1893, reported the reminiscences of three Seventh Day Baptist students from Alfred, N.Y., who applied for admission to Oberlin College in Ohio in 1847. All three went on to distinguish themselves in the education of Seventh Day Baptists.

Jonathan Allen, Ethan P. Larkin, and Ambrose C. Spicer decided to take advance work at Oberlin. The college was recognized as "not only a radical, anti-slavery school, but one in which thorough religious training was a part of the college work."¹

They traveled by stagecoach from Buffalo, N.Y., and planned to arrive on Friday. But they were detained in Cleveland and had to spend the Sabbath there, keeping it as best they could.

The young men had Oberlin College catalogues which contained the "Rules and Regulations" which specifically prohibited travel by its students going to and from the college on the Sabbath—which, for the school, referred to Sunday. It even specifically declared that "No applicant for entrance into the College would be received therein who had traveled on the Sabbath on their journey there."

While recognizing the rule, they decided to go on their journey the next day in spite of the prohibition on Sunday travel. Jonathan Allen was credited as saying:

"I have some conscience in respect to this matter. We are Sev-

Oberlin specifically prohibited travel by its students going to and from the college on the Sabbath—which, for the school, referred to Sunday.

that we have it understood before we enter, if we enter College at all, what our faith is and that we propose to vary not one iota from it.

"Now if these stage coaches are to run from here to Oberlin on Sunday, I do not know why we should not feel at liberty to ride there on one on Sunday. I have no conscientious scruples against riding out there to-day, and I think it would be a good test of the liberality of the College authorities for us to do so.

"If in consequence, they will not receive us as students, then we shall know we would not be accorded the liberty of conscience which would render our stay

all travel on the Sabbath and gave definite, special notice that no one would be accepted as a student here who had traveled on the Sabbath in coming here?"

"Yes," replied Allen calmly. "We had two catalogues of your College, and saw and carefully read and considered your regulations."

"Then how could you be expected to be received into College to-day having despised our rules and violated the Sabbath yesterday?"

"We do not understand that we have violated the Sabbath at all. We were detained and could not reach here on Friday; therefore we stayed over the Sabbath in Cleveland and kept it as best we could

cont. on page 26



SR Almanac

A look at where we have been from the pages of The Sabbath Recorder

One year ago—June 1996

"The Role of the Diaconate" theme features articles by Owen Probasco, David Taylor, Mayola Warner, and Daryl White. Ernest Bee shares the Biblical basis for the diaconate on Christian Education pages. One feature adapted from *SDB Manual of Procedures*.

Women's page lists Summer Christian Service Corps workers and sites for 1996.

News updates come from Lost Creek, W.Va., and Westerly, R.I.

Coverage shared of the January Australasian Conference in New Zealand. Chuck and Lorna Graffius lead a NET Retreat in Sydney, Australia.

Five years ago—June 1992

Cover story reminisces over the 1982 move of the SDB Center from Plainfield, N.J., to Janesville, Wis. Floor plans and photos show the many changes made over the 10 years.

A happy Don Sanford and others unload the long-awaited shipment of his new book, *A Choosing People: The History of Seventh Day Baptists*.

President Mynor Soper lists the seminars for General Conference. Topics include home schooling, supporting children in public schools, outreach ministries, and a wellness program for pastors.

The Salem, W.Va., church celebrates its 200th anniversary. Other church news comes from Marlboro, N.J., and Daytona Beach, Fla.

Former U.S. Senator Jennings Randolph turns 90.

10 years ago—June 1987

Paul Campagna fulfills lifelong dream of visiting the SDB mission in Shanghai, China. Campagna is a great-grandson of the mission's founders, Rev. Nathan and Olive (Forbes) Wardner.

First half of Pastor Kevin Butler's ordination statement presented.

"Friends Day" at Salem church attracts 150 worshippers. Church also hosts Covenant Players repertory theater.

Missionary Board supports increased office space and computer for preparing publications in Poland.

Santa Barbara, Calif., church formally organized in March.

25 years ago—June 1972

Special issue, edited by Madeline Fitz Randolph of the Women's Board, focuses on "listening." She thanks contributors Jennie Wells, Nancy Brannon, and Nancy Warner.

Frankie Davis plans to return to the states after serving in Jamaica for 12 years.

Southeastern Association celebrates 100th year.

Annual convention of SDB churches in India reports over 300 baptisms and nearly 200 healings.

Summer assistants named: Justin Camenga, Pacific Coast Association field worker; and Bob Harris, North Loup, Neb.

Salem College graduates 220. President K. Duane Hurley confers Doctor of Divinity degree on Rev. Alton Wheeler.

50 years ago—June 1947

A new booklet offered, "Present Day Sabbathism," contains statements by Alfred (N.Y.) School of Theology students. Articles include "Christlike Sabbathism" by Socrates Thompson; "Loving Sabbathism" by Carl Maxson; and "Joyful Sabbathism" by Theodore Hibbard.

A history of the North Loup church lists 12 young men from that church who became pastors.

Details provided for the pre-Conference leadership training retreat at Lewis Camp near Ashaway, R.I.

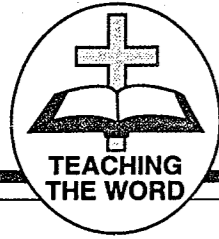
Ministers' Conference held in Battle Creek, Mich.

K.D. Hurley offers his final editorial. Editor-elect Hurley Warren presents his objectives and aspirations, calling the SR "the life-chart of Seventh Day Baptists."

...where are we headed?

Pray for—

- your church's diaconate members
- SCSC training and projects
- our outreach through historical writings
- the summer's church camping programs
- July's World Federation meetings in Jamaica
- all of the new school graduates
- those facing the "empty nest"



Christian Education

by Ernest K. Bee Jr.

Investment Opportunity

Give a Pre-Con Camp Gift Certificate to a
• Youth, 15-18 (or completed grade nine)
• Young Adult, 18-29 (or in SCSC)

Seventh Day Baptist Board of Christian Education, Inc.

Sample Certificate

PRE-CON CAMP GIFT CERTIFICATE

Presented to: *Grateful Camper*

By: A Christian Friend

1997 Pre-Conference Camp Fee Paid in the amount of: \$0.00

Bring this Gift Certificate with you to Pre-Con Camp.

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Complete the Gift Certificate Application and mail with your check to:
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P.O. Box 115, Alfred Station, New York 14803-0115.



Gift Certificate Application

1997 Pre-Con Camps

Camper's Name _____	Circle Gift Amount.
Camper's Address _____	\$30.00
Camper's Birthdate (month, day, year) _____	\$40.00
Camp Attending _____	\$60.00
If you wish to be identified as the donor please give the name you wish entered on the Certificate _____	\$120.00(Youth)
The Certificate will be sent to you for presentation. Please give your address. _____	\$120.00(Young Adult)
_____	\$ _____ .00
(If no address is given we shall send the Certificate to the camper.)	



FOCUS on Missions

Project updates from Africa

by Kirk Looper

Zambia

The maize (corn) crop of this past season was a respectable amount and of good quality. About 200 bags of maize and 3,000 pumpkins were distributed to orphans and widows. This left only 50 bags while awaiting the next crop. Soon, sweet potatoes, red beans, and groundnuts will be distributed to the needy.

The plans for a fish dam are moving ahead, but it will not be completed unless some financial help is received. It will cost about \$1,000 to recondition the water hole and restock it with good fish. The dam will be located on the Kabulankashi farm and will be surrounded with various crops.

Water well projects also continue to develop in Zambia.

To date, about 20 wells have been drilled, at a cost of \$8,121. These funds could have been spent on fertilizer, seed, and tools. However, it was felt that the wells would benefit more people in a shorter amount of time. Plans call for 10 more wells. Help is needed to cover the drilling costs of \$2,709.

A project that has aroused a lot of interest is uniforms for the Zambian Women's Aid. Current funds will fill this need for the next year or so. The ladies would like to thank those who have contributed to this project. Uniforms will enable more women to join the Women's Aid and reach out into the community with Bible studies and visitation.

The youth project, which would offer vocational education opportunities to young men and women, has not aroused much interest. Funds are still needed for the initial construction projects, and for tools and materials for the education program. Income from the ini-

tial construction will fund the next project.

Useable tools of any type would be welcomed. A list of needed tools can be obtained from the Missionary Society office, 119 Main Street, Westerly, RI, 02891.

Rwanda

The "pharmacy" project is slowly getting underway. Since the first pharmacy is on an island, most of the building materials need to be brought from the mainland.

Securing a boat is the first need. Then bricks will be made and walls

While in Rwanda, I learned that the children with physical and mental impairments had been moved to facilities better suited for their care. This has cut down on the number of children in the orphanages.

built. The remaining materials will then be brought to the island to complete the building.

When construction is completed, medicines and supplies will be brought with the physician's assistant. It will take awhile before the work is completed and everything is established. A project update will be available later.

The work with the orphans continues to move ahead. While in Rwanda, I learned that the children with physical and mental impairments had been moved to facilities better suited for their care.

This has cut down on the number of children in the orphanages. But since their basic needs have never been met, money requirements remain the same. To help meet their food budget, the orphans plant their own garden.

Last year, Seventh Day Baptists from the U.S. sent 47 boxes of used clothing and materials. This greatly helped the clothing budget. They're now requesting funds to buy one milk cow for each orphanage.

Cows that produce enough milk to help an orphanage cost about \$700 each. Cheaper cows provide a half-gallon of milk each day, while the more expensive ones produce two gallons or more.

Malawi

The well projects in Malawi are providing water for many people. It appears that the well planned for Chipho will soon be available.

However, within the last few months, the drilling company has refused to move its rig to drill just one well, even though the money is available. Please pray that another drilling rig can be located, or that someone else will request a well close enough to Chipho so that both can be drilled.

The hospitals and clinics continue to desperately need medicines and bed clothes, as well as electricity. Some clinics are very close to electricity, while others may be over a mile away.

In either case, the effect is less successful medical work and limited time for it. The absence of electricity has a definite effect on the work being done there, and the number of lamps are limited. Please pray for funds to help improve these conditions.



the BEACON

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

June 1997

Long drive for a quick recharge

by Stephanie Sholtz, Verona, N.Y.

A little before midnight on Valentine's Day, we pulled into the parking lot of the Battle Creek, Mich., SDB Church. We stumbled out of the car to greet friends from across the country.

Why were we there? For a young adult retreat hosted by the Battle Creek church.

Although many could not make it, people all the way from California and New York comprised the small group.

Our plan for the weekend: to focus on the idea of radical living. We wanted to find practical ways to be radical in our walk with Christ as individuals, young adults, churches, and even as a denomination as a whole.

Throughout the weekend, the teachings and discussions were intense, as were the worship times. It seems like we covered a lot of topics in those two days, but they all related to how we can live more fully for Christ and be open to His direction and guidance.

In Mark 8:34-35, Jesus says, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the Gospel's will save it." We need to strive as individuals and in our churches to follow God's will and let Him have control in every area of life.

I think the retreat was a good reminder that God can do anything

if we truly believe that He will do it, and we surrender our lives to Him.

Sabbath night, we had an extended time of prayer, during which many of us lifted up the

Although many could not make it, people all the way from California and New York comprised the small group.

concerns on our hearts. It was really special to be able to share that time with God and each other.

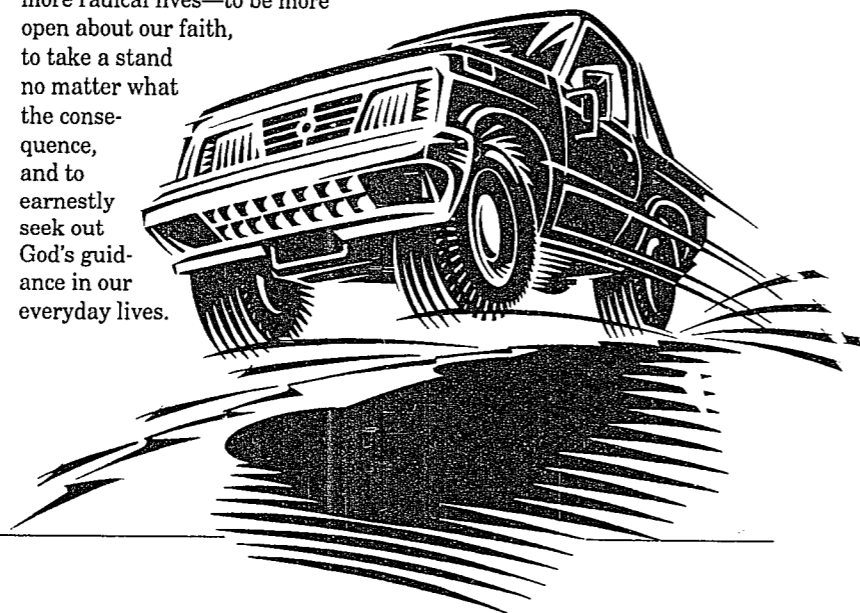
I think all of us walked away with a renewed conviction to live more radical lives—to be more open about our faith, to take a stand no matter what the consequence, and to earnestly seek out God's guidance in our everyday lives.

With all that said, don't let me kid you. The teachings and discussions were excellent and took up most of the weekend, but the time was not entirely filled with study and worship. In fact, we managed to sneak in some pretty intense fellowship times, too.

And with all the incredible food everyone graciously donated, we certainly found plenty of opportunities to head down to the kitchen for a snack.

So, I guess the question is: "Was the eight and a half hour drive to Michigan, and the 12-hour drive home (yes, it did take that much longer), really worth it?" For a day and a half stay?? It certainly was!

God used this weekend to encourage and minister. It was truly a blessing to all who took part.



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admonition and counsel, church meetings being very frequent occurrence. The soul of a member was deemed of such precious worth, that the church could not let them go without a struggle. There were few cases where the erring one was not finally reclaimed.¹

Yet this discipline appeared to have been carried to the extreme during the years of the last resident pastor of that church.

The minutes of the Newport church from 1813-1836 reveal that although 21 were baptized (mostly children of members), there were 16 dismissals for failure to abide by the covenant relations deemed necessary.

Among those dismissed was Jeremiah Bliss, the son of the previous pastor and a leading deacon and trustee. He and his wife were brought before the church for "want of strictness in keeping the Sabbath"

The History of the Newport Church in the *Seventh Day Baptist Memorial* suggests that contributing factors may have included a change in Bliss' theological view, his connection with the Masonic Order, and his work in the custom-house.²

There was one and no more. Therefore he knew not how to 'stoop to conquer,' nor yet how to persuade the erring in love and tenderness—he must rebuke and drive."

Many of the early Covenants included the passage from Matthew 18 as to the manner by which church discipline was to be administered. The Covenant of the New York City church, constituted in 1845, includes the affirmation:

3. We do promise to watch over each other for good, to reprove each other for any apparent want of Christ's spirit: to avoid all manner of communication contrary to the law of love. And should a grievance arise, we promise to follow the directions of our Saviour recorded in the 18th chapter of Matthew, 15th, 16th and 17th verses.

The record books of many of the churches during the 19th century often recorded in detail the various attempts to follow these instructions.

For example, the minutes of the Milton, Wis., church for October 1853 record the appointment of a committee of three "to see Bro. Stephen Maxson and ascertain

Covenants

er reports concerning his engaged in the traffic of ar- spirits are correct or not, and er he has traveled from Mil- Madison on the Sabbath with tention of doing business." e next three church meetings some reference to the con- ce of the committee and its

April 1854, the church vot- accept and overlook Brother Maxson's acknowledgment respect- ing his traveling on the Sabbath. But they asked that "the pastor be a committee to visit Bro. Stephen Maxson and state to him that his views in relation to ardent spirits did not meet the approval of the church."

The next meeting instructed the pastor to write a letter. Three months later, they voted that the clerk write a letter of admonition and require Brother Maxson's presence at the next church meeting.

Over the months, various reports or postponements were made. In September 1855, nearly two years after the first committee was appointed, they were finally able to report that "Brother Maxson confessed that he was sorry that he had engaged in the liquor traffic." The church then voted "that we receive the report of said committee and were satisfied with the confession of Bro. Maxson." *SR*

¹Charles H. Greene, "History of Seventh Day Baptists in America: Newport, Rhode Island," unpublished manuscript at the SDB Historical Society, Janesville, WI, p. 34.

²History of the Newport Church, *SDB Memorial 1852-54*, Vol. 2, p. 54.



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Although many could not make it, people all the way from California and New York comprised the small group.

Our plan for the weekend: to focus on the idea of radical living. We wanted to find practical ways to be radical in our walk with Christ as individuals, young adults, churches, and even as a denomination as a whole.

Throughout the weekend, the teachings and discussions were intense, as were the worship times. It seems like we covered a lot of topics in those two days, but they all related to how we can live more fully for Christ and be open to His direction and guidance.

In Mark 8:34-35, Jesus says, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the Gospel's will save it." We need to strive as individuals and in our churches to follow God's will and let Him have control in every area of life.

I think the retreat was a good reminder that God can do anything

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Although many could not make it, people all the way from California and New York comprised the small group.

concerns on our hearts. It was really special to be able to share that time with God and each other.

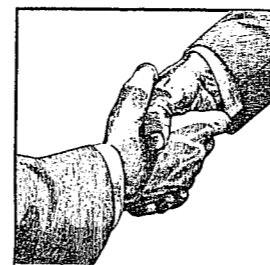
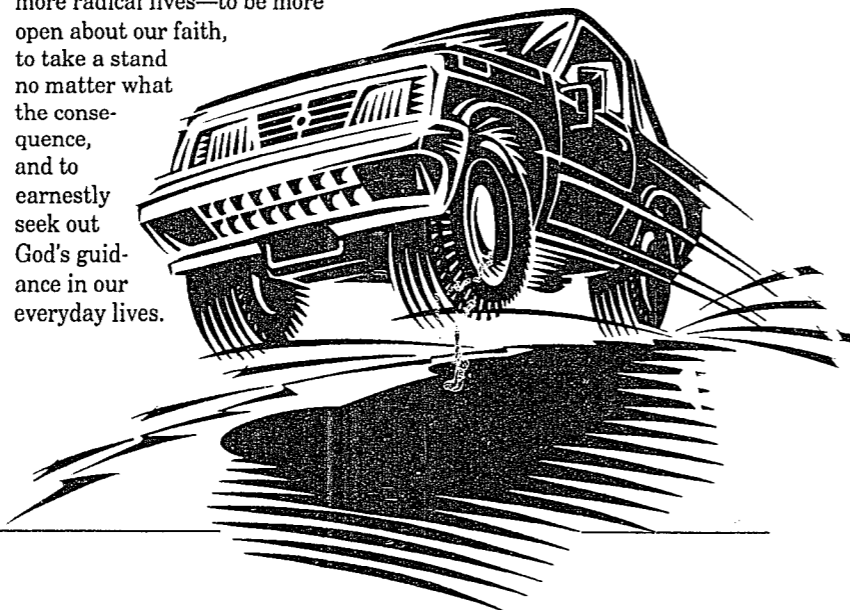
I think all of us walked away with a renewed conviction to live more radical lives—to be more open about our faith, to take a stand no matter what the consequence, and to earnestly seek out God's guidance in our everyday lives.

fellowship times, too.

And with all the incredible food everyone graciously donated, we certainly found plenty of opportunities to head down to the kitchen for a snack.

So, I guess the question is: "Was the eight and a half hour drive to Michigan, and the 12-hour drive home (yes, it did take that much longer), really worth it?" For a day and a half stay?? It certainly was!

God used this weekend to encourage and minister. It was truly a blessing to all who took part.



Seeking Spiritual Maturity: COVENANT BUILDING
An annual emphasis of the SDB General Council

Church discipline in covenants

From Don Sanford's historical study, "Establishing a Church Covenant."

The Biblical concept of covenant involves discipline.

In his unpublished manuscript history of the Newport, R.I., Seventh Day Baptist Church, Charles H. Greene wrote:

The church records are saturated with cases of discipline, admonition and counsel; church meetings being very frequent occurrence. The soul of a member was deemed of such precious worth, that the church could not let them go without a struggle. There were few cases where the erring one was not finally reclaimed.¹

Yet this discipline appeared to have been carried to the extreme during the years of the last resident pastor of that church.

The minutes of the Newport church from 1813-1836 reveal that although 21 were baptized (mostly children of members), there were 16 dismissals for failure to abide by the covenant relations deemed necessary.

Among those dismissed was Jeremiah Bliss, the son of the previous pastor and a leading deacon and trustee. He and his wife were brought before the church for "want of strictness in keeping the Sabbath"

The History of the Newport Church in the *Seventh Day Baptist Memorial* suggests that contributing factors may have included a change in Bliss' theological view, his connection with the Masonic Order, and his work in the custom-house.²

On the other hand, Greene's description of Pastor Henry Burdick may also have had a role in the loss of many of the church's members.

Pastor Burdick was described as "a man of Puritanic mold of mind; having marked out for himself the exact line of truth and duty, he required of all his flock to march in the same straight and narrow way that his own feet trod. There could not be two views of Truth to him. Truth was one and indivisible. Therefore he knew not how to 'stoop to conquer,' nor yet how to persuade the erring in love and tenderness—he must rebuke and drive."

Many of the early Covenants included the passage from Matthew 18 as to the manner by which church discipline was to be administered. The Covenant of the New York City church, constituted in 1845, includes the affirmation:

3. We do promise to watch over each other for good, to reprove each other for any apparent want of Christian spirit: to avoid all manner of communication contrary to the law of love. And should a grievance arise, we promise to follow the directions of our Saviour recorded in the 18th chapter of Matthew, 15th, 16th and 17th verses.

The record books of many of the churches during the 19th century often recorded in detail the various attempts to follow these instructions.

For example, the minutes of the Milton, Wis., church for October 1853 record the appointment of a committee of three "to see Bro. Stephen Maxson and ascertain

whether reports concerning his being engaged in the traffic of ardent spirits are correct or not, and whether he has traveled from Milton to Madison on the Sabbath with the intention of doing business."

The next three church meetings made some reference to the continuance of the committee and its work.

In April 1854, the church voted to accept and overlook Brother Maxson's acknowledgment respecting his traveling on the Sabbath. But they asked that "the pastor be a committee to visit Bro. Stephen Maxson and state to him that his views in relation to ardent spirits did not meet the approval of the church."

The next meeting instructed the pastor to write a letter. Three months later, they voted that the clerk write a letter of admonition and require Brother Maxson's presence at the next church meeting.

Over the months, various reports or postponements were made. In September 1855, nearly two years after the first committee was appointed, they were finally able to report that "Brother Maxson confessed that he was sorry that he had engaged in the liquor traffic." The church then voted "that we receive the report of said committee and were satisfied with the confession of Bro. Maxson." **SR**

¹Charles H. Greene, "History of Seventh Day Baptists in America: Newport, Rhode Island," unpublished manuscript at the SDB Historical Society, Janesville, WI, p. 34.

²History of the Newport Church, *SDB Memorial 1852-54*, Vol. 2, p. 54.



Why go to Conference?

by Owen Probasco

Greetings from your General Conference.

Just what is Conference? What is the theme of this year's Conference, and why should you want to go?

Conference means "involve-ment." It means being tuned in to confer, to talk it over, to share dreams, needs, and ideals. It is a coming together with expectations—expectations to be uplifted, expectations of meeting with like-minded people.

Conference is the experience of being turned on. Turned on by Christian fellowship, contagious fellowship, active fellowship. A time and a situation where you are personally involved, where you are a part of the solution(s), where your voice is really heard. It is being turned on by possibilities and challenges facing Seventh Day Baptists in this very day and age.

Conference is also an opportunity for shared triumph. Triumph in knowing Christ and many of His people, in knowing where we're going and being glad to be on board. There is triumph in realizing that we are an immediate and intimate member of His family.

Also, Conference is a time where we can excel, together. It is a time for collective review and renewal; of challenge and cooperation; of uplift and usefulness; of growth and graciousness; and Christ-centered commitment.

Do you ever get "run down"? Do the doldrums get to you? Do you ever need to be re-energized? Today, electric cars can go "great guns"—until they run out of power.

Like the power stations needed by electric cars, Conference can be a "recharging station." It can re-

new your energy for God and the things of Christ, and for the work of Seventh Day Baptists. It can renew us in our spheres of influence and activity, and around our churches, Associations, and denomination.

The fellowship shared at Conference also helps each of us realize our uniqueness while strengthening a common bond. That bond renews our faith, pumps power into tired limbs, and helps revitalize hearts and minds as we focus on Christ and His program for our lives.

Paul states in Philippians 4:13 that "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." And we can do even more—bigger and better things through Christ's strength flowing through us.

We're a bit like the old hemp hayrope. Together, we can provide additional opportunities, greater possibilities, and positive outreach for God through such things as *The Sabbath Recorder*, the *Helping Hand*, and all the work of the various boards and agencies.

Let's face it. Our boards and agencies might well represent the oxygen found in the air we breathe. They're always there, doing their thing. The better they function, the less we seem to be aware of their presence and our understood "need" for them, of their influence upon our lives, and of their rock-hard support of the Lord's work among SDBs.

It is also true that the deeper we breathe or partake of their energizing support, the greater our appreciation, awareness, and involvement with our denomination. Enthusiasm for the work of fellow SDBs will grow as we collectively gain strength and vigor for the cause of Christ.

So, again, our Conference theme for 1997 is "Tuned in (to God),

Turned on (by the Spirit), and Tri-umphant (in Christ)."

If we collectively recognize the importance of this theme, the logical flow of truth that it presents, and the blessings available through acceptance of its message, we cannot help but become energized and encouraged for Christian growth through the years ahead.

Throughout the Conference, beautiful uplifting music and messages through songs of the Christian faith will be generously shared and enjoyed. Come and be a part of this year's Conference experience.

Yes, many routine and even mundane matters are addressed at Conference. But there are also challenging messages, Christian interaction and bonding, encouragement, and, most of all, Christ. So, I'll see you in Kansas. May God bless each one of you! *SR*

Seminars

Seminars this year will include:

- an uplifting view of Seventh Day Baptist history
- a blueprint for positive Youth Programs and Christ-centered activities
- a supportive approach for single parents, with an eye towards wholesome responsible social interaction
- the sensitive handling of issues around Christian financial planning and avenues of choice.

A newcomer reports from Leonardsville-Brookfield

by Bill Bowyer

I expect that many SDBs, like me, have heard of the church in Brookfield, N.Y. They might know that it's located in central New York (about 25 miles from Utica), but not much more.

Last November, I went to Brookfield for the first time. In January, I was called to be their pastor. I have enjoyed getting better acquainted with the people and the buildings that comprise the Leonardsville-Brookfield SDB Church; a church which is unique in a number of ways.

In 1990, First Brookfield (in the village of Leonardsville), and Second Brookfield (in Brookfield), merged into one congregation.

The congregation meets for Sabbath worship from May-October at Leonardsville, which is about five miles from Brookfield. During the other months, it meets in Brookfield. It shares facilities with First (Day) Baptist, whose membership is about double that of the SDBs. The SDB parish house and parsonage are next to each other, about a block from the church.

The congregation is a good mix of older members, young adults, and children. Children make up about one-third of those at Sabbath worship and over half of the regular attendance at Sabbath School. They range in age from 1 to 15.

Some of the parents are relatively new in the faith, but they participate in a variety of activities. Everyone is friendly and loving, helpful, encouraging, sincere, and receptive.

After surveying the congregation, we started an informal worship service on Sabbath Eve, followed by a prayer meeting. We

also began weekday Bible studies. A Youth Group has been started, with emphasis on three "S"s: "Spiritual"—meetings each Sabbath afternoon; "Socials"—monthly; and "Service"—projects for the church grounds and for the needy.

I've made a special effort to reacquaint the congregation with our denomination's people and programs. A number of SDB leaders have accepted our invitation to spend a day with us (usually Sabbath), to speak and dialogue about their ministry.

These guests include Calvin

Babcock, Gordon and Beverly Kilts, Kirk Looper, and Val Bennett. In addition, Pastor Steve James was with us one Sabbath to talk about the program for the Association meeting in Verona, N.Y.

During spring vacation, my wife Gwen and I led a mini-Vacation Bible School. The theme was, "What is the Bible?"

Now that you are better acquainted with us, we would appreciate your prayers as we strive to "grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior," and minister in His Name. Thank you, Lord! *SR*

Pastors accept b-ball challenge

by Kecia Thompsongordon

The night was hot; spectators lined the walk. As the early March sun grew dim, the players took their places on the court.

The clock struck six, Eastern Standard Time, and a moment of silence was observed by a number of SDB youth across the country. The moment I am talking about is the youth/pastor basketball game that took place at Pastors' Conference in Daytona Beach, Fla.

The youth were represented by Andrew Hambleton, Kecia Thompsongordon, Sam Spearl, and Rick Crouch. The pastors who played were Jim Galanaugh, Andrew Camenga, Russ Johnson, and Nathan Crandall.

Quick-witted remarks flew from both sides. The youth shirts read, "Gonna whip them Pastors like their mothers" on the front, and "Spare the Rod, Spoil the child" on the back. Someone sug-

gested to put the basketball hoop in the handicap parking space because that's how the pastors play! The clergy quickly jumped at the chance to match skills with the youth.

The pastors attacked with their offense from the get-go, winning the first game 20 to 6. In the second game, the ministers began to slack in their abilities and had to make a substitution. The final score of the second game was 20 to 12, again in the clerics' favor.

I want the pastors to know that it is not over. Conference is right around the corner. The youth will prevail! To quote Pastor Chuck Graffius, who faithfully stood behind the youth, "They might not have won, but they sure did whip 'em!"

Pastors, thanks for the games, but we're still going to win at Conference. See you there! *SR*

Kirkwood church reaches out

by Thelma E. Stewart

In 1993, the Kirkwood, Mo., Seventh Day Baptist Church incorporated "V-COM" as a nonprofit organization. Its purpose was to aid flood victims by providing no-cost phone voice mail service to the homeless and "phoneless."

We viewed V-COM as a way our small group could help the community and also acquaint people with Seventh Day Baptists. The service is still available.

In cooperation with our Sabbathkeeping brothers and sisters of the Philadelphia Christian Ministries (formerly pastored by Alvin Bernard, now led by Dr. Arthur Lee) and the Zion Travelers Baptist Church, V-COM continues to reach out.

We are broadening our scope to develop computer labs at inner city churches (Project C-NET). Eighty computers have been donated for our use, with the promise of 60 more. Basic funding for the

project is donated to V-COM by industry and private sources.

Currently, we have a pilot project at an inner city church. The goal is to develop a standard curriculum and prototype of this inner city, church-based information center. We want to see as many churches as possible become a focal point for community-wide education and draw the inner city children to the teachings of Christ.

A community church is a ready resource with space, location, people, and finances. It provides a wholesome and safe environment for children and other at-risk population (e.g., single mothers).

The church-based information centers will be under the supervision of the community church, and accredited to meet C-NET educational and ethical standards. V-COM is setting basic standards and curriculum.

The program will be free, but

those wishing to participate must sign a contract to abide by the following guidelines:

- 1) Go to church at least two times a month.
- 2) Go to Bible study two times a month.
- 3) Do all their regular school work.
- 4) Abstain from alcohol and drugs.
- 5) Abstain from sex.
- 6) Wear modest clothing.
- 7) Generally observe the Ten Commandments.

Because we are working with other churches, we do not stress the "Seventh Day Baptist" label. But information about SDBs will be available, and people will know that V-COM is sponsored by the Kirkwood Seventh Day Baptist Church.

We are indebted to one of our members, Phillip Frankford, for his seemingly inexhaustible efforts as he spearheads this project. *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 SR,

I enjoyed the article about China (Pearls, Feb. SR), very much. However, one name of note was left out. My aunt, Miriam Shaw, gave devoted care in China. She developed TB and had to be sent home.

Judy Shaw Burdick Downey
Camp Hill, PA

Dear Kevin:

Thank you so much for your diligent efforts on behalf of *The Sabbath Recorder*. I'm sure it is no small chore to put together such a magazine.

I always read the *Recorder* in its entirety but turn first to Don Sanford's article on the history of our people. I especially appreciated his honesty

in the April issue concerning Thomas Hubbard. I also noticed with interest his church fellowship article in which he gave us the Covenants of the Newport and Daytona churches.

I was intrigued by the word "edification." Looking it up in Webster, I found it to mean, "instruction to improve, especially in a moral or spiritual sense." Edification is a goal, so stated in the Newport Covenant and also by implication in the Daytona Covenant. What is the criteria we use for this instruction?

Surely we can all agree that the Holy Bible, the Inspired Word of God, is our final true source of edification. What we think or feel on a subject means very little unless it can be substantiated by Scripture.

Now on this "Christmas thing," as the gentleman from California so aptly called it, perhaps we need edification. If we can spend a bit of time doing very basic research in our local libraries, we will find the ancient roots of the customs and traditions we observe. Armed with this knowledge, we can then go to our Bibles in full confidence that Almighty God will give us the edification we need on this subject.

For your research, the following texts will prove helpful: *4,000 Years of Christmas, The Golden Bough, The Two Babylons*, and of course almost any good encyclopedia.

Sincerely,
Dee Morgan
San Mateo, FL

My character house

by Sheri Nordloh

Throughout the years there have been many changes to the buildings here on Main Street, and my house is no exception.

The original structure had no plumbing, and the lady who ran the post office and telephone office (both housed here) lived in the kitchen and small bedroom. Later one closet was added to the bedroom.

Eventually one of the owners installed indoor plumbing, and built on a bathroom. The front door was changed from the street side to the south side of the house, and sidewalks put in.

The last owners built porches on the front and kitchen doors, added closets, two beautiful bay windows, and interesting shelving throughout the house. They also put in a shower and washer/dryer hookups, and put in a back door to the original closet, which is now a laundry room.

After I moved in, Dad built a storage shed, moved some of the outside buildings to his farm,

and helped me renovate the yard! I have also painted, wallpapered, and have added special touches to make my home uniquely "me."

As I think back about our Sabbath School study on the Holy Spirit these past months, I can't help but relate the things I've read to the renovation of my house.

When I accepted Christ as my Savior, the Lord came to dwell in my heart—sort of like when I moved into my home. There was a lot of initial cleaning to do, to make my heart a fit place for God to live.

Just as each previous owner of my house changed it to more adequately fit their needs, so God changes my heart—day by day, month by month, and year by year—into His image, in order that I might "fit" into His kingdom. Some have been cosmetic changes, and others have been major renovations. Some changes have been rather painful and costly.

Since my Dad owns my physical house, let's suppose that when I

moved in he told me that I could only use the bedroom and the bathroom; that he was going to keep the other rooms for himself to pile all his junk in.

That sounds pretty ridiculous, but isn't that what we do with God? We give Him little bits and pieces of our heart and then wonder why we are struggling with anger, bitterness, self-control, and love is absent from our lives. It's because we are treating God as a tenant, rather than the owner of our lives.

Billy Graham, in his book, *The Holy Spirit*, makes the statement: "It is not how much of the Spirit we have, but how much the Spirit has of us." Dr. Graham challenges us to face our sins, which block the flow of the Holy Spirit in our lives; he asks us to examine our motives for wanting the Holy Spirit—for our glory or His; and he calls us to awaken from our spiritual lethargy and prepare for the Lord's return.

I highly recommend this book for your continuing study. It has been very informative as well as convicting to me as I seek to know God through the power of His Spirit. *SR*

From "The Flatirons Press," newsletter of the Boulder, Colo., SDB Church. Sheri Nordloh lives in her 1915 vintage house in Strasburg, Colo.

This framed plaque was unveiled on Sabbath, March 15, 1997, as the Daytona Beach church dedicated its beautiful new addition. Another sign thanked the SDB Memorial Fund for helping to provide a comfortable new conference room, put to use by General Council and Pastors' Conference just prior to the dedication celebration.

The Seventh Day Baptist Church of Daytona Beach, Florida
Gratefully acknowledges

Sedgley Thornbury

for the part he played in the development
of this addition to the church building.

His vision and generosity
gave us the courage to overcome obstacles
which at times seemed insurmountable.

March 15, 1997

Recognizing God's mighty hands in rebuilt Jamaican church

by Deacon M. Harrison

A Dedication Service for our rebuilt church facility was held on the 6th of April, 1997, at the Waterford Seventh Day Baptist Church in Jamaica. It was an evening that will never be forgotten.

Our church was demolished when the roof was taken off by Hurricane Gilbert in 1988.

The ribbon was cut by Mother F. Hunter. Deacon M. Harrison offered prayer, and the door was opened by Deacon S. Roye. Our pastor, E. Downes, introduced the chairman for the evening, Pastor N.B. Thompson.

Sis. Y. Bennett presented a history of the church. She took

us back to 1923, the year this church was founded by Lewis Mignatt, who died in 1938. A step from his old house remains in the church yard as a cherished memorial to him.

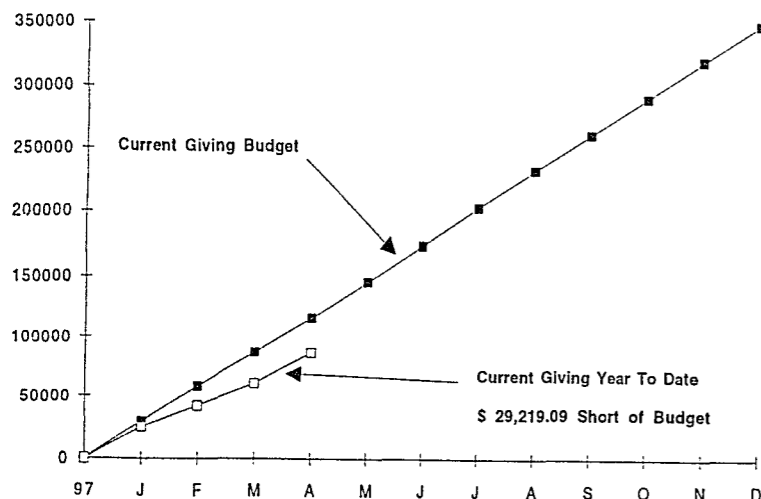
We paused to recognize God's goodness to us. Our church was demolished when the roof was taken off by Hurricane Gilbert in 1988. Nine years of hard work and planning have taken us this far. Where do we go from here?

There was also a Recognition Service for Pastor A.A. Chambers for 25 years service.

The church was beautifully "dressed" by Sis. J. Malcome of Bath and the Hunter family, who played a great part in the church's operations.

We had to stop at this point to give God the glory for what He has done. We now have the confidence and assurance that He who began this great work will be able to take us to the end. *SR*

Current Giving 1997



Accessions

Berlin, NY

Matthew Olson, pastor

Joined after baptism

Kevin Bonesteel

Joined after testimony

Peter Bullinger

Paula Dibble

Joined by letter

Matthew Wilson

Salem, WV

Dale Thorngate, pastor

Joined after baptism

David Richard Leda

Savannah Lane Goodson

Jacqueline Suzanne Sias

Mary Ellen Cain

Births

Green.—A son, Conor Alexander Green, was born to Mark and Faith (Camenga) Green of Wurzburg, Germany, on March 22, 1997.

McNeme.—A daughter, Christina Mae McNeme, was born to Steve and Vivian McNeme of Somers, MT, on March 24, 1997.

Soncrant.—A daughter, Olivia Karen Soncrant, was born to Fred and Tiffany Soncrant of Moreno Valley, CA, on April 2, 1997.

Obituaries

Lewis.—Marian P. Lewis, 84, died on March 31, 1997, of septicemia at Vitas Hospice Unit in Riverside, Calif. She was born on February 1, 1913, in Farina, Ill., to George Greer Green and Rena (Rogers) Green. She was a Seventh Day

Obituaries, continued

Baptist all her life, and lived in Riverside for 50 years.

In 1939, Marian met and married William B. Lewis, who died on February 3, 1991. During their years together, she was his right hand, managing accounts, rentals, and other business. On March 17, 1995, she married Herbert Crouch.

Marian was an elementary teacher for the Jurupa Unified School district at West Riverside Elementary and Pedley Elementary for 18 years before retiring in 1973. She attended Eastern Illinois State Teacher's College and received her bachelor's degree in elementary education from LaVerne University. She was the editor and a contributor to the book, *Inheritance Greater than Wealth*.

She was a member and deaconess of the Riverside SDB Church. She was also politically active in the community, and was appointed to the Riverside County Commission on the Status of Women in 1976.

Survivors include her husband, Herb Crouch; three daughters, Marjorie Greer of Bridgeport, W.Va., Dorothy Jane Lewis-Carey of San Diego, Calif., and RuthAnne Peil of Rialto, Calif.; three sons, Ellis of Riverside and twins, Stephen of Downey, Calif., and Stanley of Riverside; one brother, Maurice Green of Stronghurst, Ill.; one sister, Mildred Harwood of Granville, N.Y.; seven grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

Memorial services were held on April 5, 1997, at the Riverside SDB Church.

Baker.—E. Lucille Baker, 83, of Alfred, N.Y., died on February 9, 1997, at her home following a long illness.

She was born on August 30, 1913, in Whitesville, N.Y., the daughter of George and Grace (Stillman) Smith. In 1933, she

married Gerald A. Baker, who died in January 1968.

Lucille was a graduate of the Rural Teachers Training class in Alfred, and taught school in Allentown, N.Y., and Fulmer Valley. She had been employed by the former Rogers Machine Shop and the former Glidden Pottery, both in Alfred. She retired from Alfred Agriculture and Technical Institute, and was a member of the Alfred Seventh Day Baptist Church.

Survivors include three sons, Charles of Wellsville, N.Y., George ("Mickey") of Hornell, N.Y., and Dale of Belmont, N.Y.; one brother, Lyle Smith, of Whitesville; two sisters, Gladys Mattison of Whitesville, and Minerva Theetge of Corning, N.Y.; 11 grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews. In addition to her husband, she was predeceased by her son, William ("Bud"); her daughter, Shirley White; one sister, Sylvia Walters; and a brother, Leslie Smith.

Funeral services were held on February 12, 1997, at the Alfred SDB Church, with Rev. Leon Wheeler officiating. Final interment was in Alfred Rural Cemetery, Alfred.

Wolfe.—James W. Wolfe Sr., 56, of Ashaway, R.I., died on March 6, 1997, at the Westerly (R.I.) Hospital after being stricken at his home.

He was born in Baltimore, Md., on February 10, 1941, the son of John W. and Eveiyn (Tompkins) Wolfe, and the stepson of Luella M. Wolfe. On August 5, 1961, he married Priscilla Larkin in Ashaway.

Mr. Wolfe served in the Navy, and was employed at Pfizer Inc. for 34 years as an assistant engineering project manager of the U.S. Pharmaceutical Group Division. He was a member of the First Seventh Day Baptist Church of Hopkinton in Ashaway.

An avid golfer, he was a member

of the Lindbrook Country Club Golf League, where he shot two holes-in-one. He was also a member of the Shennecossett Golf League in Groton, Conn., and a charter member of the Ashaway Ambulance Association.

In addition to his wife of 36 years, he is survived by two daughters, Katrina Heinemann of Bradford, R.I., and Tanya Pont of Wood River Junction, R.I.; one son, James Jr. of Ashaway; three brothers, John and George, both of Maryland, and Leonard of Virginia; one sister, Janet Freeland of Maryland; and four grandchildren.

Funeral services were held on March 8, 1997, in the Buckler-Johnston Funeral Home, Westerly. Interment was in the First Hopkinton Cemetery, Ashaway.

Cushman.—Myrtle W. Cushman, 74, died on April 5, 1997, in Bradenton, Fla.

She was born in Websterville, Vt., and lived in Richmond, Mass., and Petersburg, N.Y. She spent winters in Bradenton Beach, Fla., for 22 years.

Myrtle was a homemaker and a graduate of Berkshire Community College in Pittsfield, Mass. She was a member of the Seventh Day Baptist Church in Berlin, N.Y. For a time, she ran a Sabbatarian reading room supported by the donation of Sabbath literature from the SDB Center.

Survivors include her husband, Paul G. Cushman of Bradenton Beach and Petersburg; two daughters, Mary Holt of Cape Elizabeth, Maine, and Laura Mirabal of Haverhill, Mass.; four sons, Philip of Phoenix, Ariz., Kenneth of Tampa, Fla., Robert of Columbus, Ohio, and Jon of Virginia Beach, Va.; three sisters, Eleanor McKinney of Elizabethton, Tenn., Lois White of Newbury, Vt., and Pauline Lemmerman of Delanson, N.Y.; 18 grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren.

A stand for, cont. from page 14

in a hotel. The next day as the stages were permitted to run, we could not see any reason why we should not be permitted to ride out on one. Having conscientiously kept the Sabbath according to the commandment, we could see it to be no wrong."

"Oh, well you are Seventh Day Baptists, are you?"

"Yes sir; and we thought we might better know as we entered your college, if we entered at all, if we could do so as Seventh Day Baptists, and what liberties we were to have for the exercise of our conscientious, religious convictions as it respects the Sabbath."

"All right! If you are Seventh Day Baptists!"

Soon President Mahan and Prof. Charles G. Phiney entered the office. They were introduced, and an explanation of the circumstances

was given. Both these cordially welcomed the students and requested that they feel at home, assuring them that being Seventh Day Baptists would be no bar to entire fellowship there. Prof. Phiney said, "If I was among Seventh Day Baptists I would keep the Sabbath with them without hesitation."

Jonathan Allen was not quite sure how to take that remark, questioning whether it was a hint that they ought to be willing to keep Sunday with them. However it may have been intended, the students were treated by all but one of the professors with great cordiality and unreserved friendship. They were excused from all class exercises and other duties on the Sabbath.

The next Sunday at church, Pastor Phiney extended an invitation to all new students to unite

with the church for the time of their stay in school, and publicly extended to the Seventh Day Baptist students an invitation, assuring them that such church relation should not embarrass them in the keeping of their own Sabbath.

Allen repeatedly remarked that he felt assured that the ride to Oberlin on Sunday, thus boldly asserting their principles, was a great gain, and that they were respected the more for the determination thus manifested to maintain what they thought to be right, religiously.² SR

¹Abigail Allen, *The Life and Sermons of Jonathan Allen, President of Alfred University* (Pacific Press, Oakland, CA, 1894), p. 48.

²*The Sabbath Recorder*, vol. 59, #13, March 30, 1893, p. 204.

Are there "sub-human" people?

by Jack Morgan

Last year our congregation came into contact with a group that believes that Cain was the result of a union between the serpent and Eve (Genesis 3), and that there are sub-human people with us yet today who are the result of that union. I was somewhat familiar with the idea, having been exposed to it some years ago back in my home state of Indiana.

Printed below is the result of the Bible study we were prompted to do on the subject. Perhaps it will be of value to others.

A Bible study

"Was Cain the result of a union between the Serpent and Eve, rather than the offspring of Adam and Eve?"

• Gen. 1:21-25 "kind after its kind." The law of biogenesis is the law of the Creator. Serpents and human beings cannot beget *physical* human children.

• Gen. 4:1 "Adam *knew* his wife Eve; and she conceived, and bore Cain." Also see verses 17 and 25 to confirm the choice of words used to convey the fact of the matter in question.

• Gen. 4:6-7 The Lord's statement to Cain, "If you do well shall you not be accepted? And if you do not well, sin lies at your door." This statement by the Creator, regarding an offering, places Cain in the same position of responsibility and expectation as those to whom He gave the Law.

• Deut. 30:19 "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore, choose life, that both you and your seed may live."

• Gen. 4:7 (last part) "And unto you shall be his desire, and you shall rule over him." This is the first reference to the law of the firstborn. This promise would never have been made to Cain if he was some form of sub-human offspring of a serpent.

• Acts 17:26 "And hath made of *one blood* all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth." SR

Jack Morgan pastors the Putnam County (Fla.) SDB Church.

KEVIN'S CORNER

Okay, so I get choked up watching commercials.

Call me sentimental, but I know for a fact that Donna Bond (page 11) and I were not the only ones in tears during the "empty nest" Bible study at last year's Conference. Lucky Donna. She was in the back of the auditorium. I was right in front to take pictures, with nowhere to hide.

Thankfully I was able to compose myself during Norm Burdick's excellent and more cerebral portions of the study—just in time to blubber while listening to a heart-grabbing song. Norm would again provide some solid teaching, my eyes could move from deep red to slightly pink,

and then Vicki would share a real-life mother's perspective from her personal journal. I could have used a bath towel.

I sat there thinking, "How ridiculous!" I calculated, "I've got three more years until our first one flies the coop, and 11 more to go with Jackson!" Well, now it's two and 10 more years; didn't that Conference start just the other day? Time is flying beyond warp speed.

On a church assignment several years before the Burdicks' Bible study, I took a side trip to visit my alma mater in Houghton, N.Y. It so happened to be freshmen orientation weekend, with many parents there to drop off their young. Lots of excited greenhorns and lots of older folks with furrowed brows (right below where their own horns used to be...).

I was about to pull out of the parking lot when I froze behind the wheel. One row of cars over, I witnessed one of the most touching farewells I had ever seen.

A triangle of believers—Mom, Dad, and "baby" girl—had their heads down as the man prayed quietly yet fervently over his almost grown-up young lady. I could feel the power of familial love seep through my windshield. Their hands locked tightly, finally loosening when the "amen" was announced, only to give way to gently engulfing embraces.

Was this their first child to leave the nest? The last? The only?

It took me back to the spot, a decade-plus prior, when my folks drove away from the boys' dorm. Reliving the blind excitement of being a "college man" now blended with a protective parent's perspective.

Their tears merged with mine. I had never seen these people before, but knowing that Janet and I may repeat that scene in a brief amount of time yanked hard at my heartstrings.

Mentioning this month's theme caused a pastor friend to reflect on his older son's departing the nest for college.

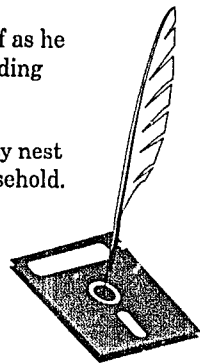
"It was one of the saddest days of my life," this loving dad confessed. "And for quite a while afterwards, it was like someone had died around here."

His voice on the phone trailed off as he reflected on his second son's impending graduation from high school.

Transitions. We're getting a taste of the empty nest (at least, empty garage) at our household.

As last week's piano lesson time drew near, I asked Jan when she was leaving to take the girls. "I'm not going. Remember? She can drive now."

And off drove our baby girls.



Your Last Issue?

If you wish to continue receiving *The SR*, please fill out the enclosed post card (or peel off your mailing label) and mail it back today. We want to make sure this magazine—now in its 153rd year—gets into the hands of those who really want to read it. Thanks for your loyal support!

Muriel I. Osborn, 70, beloved wife of Pastor Paul Osborn, passed to her rest on Resurrection Sunday, March 30, 1997, after a long illness. She had been living with her daughter in Claremont, Minn.

She was born on December 27, 1926, in Verona, N.Y., the daughter of Floyd and Jennie Sholtz. On August 31, 1949, she married Paul, who preceded her in death on March 2, 1995.

Muriel taught kindergarten, and served as a substitute teacher and assistant office manager. Most recently, she worked as a receptionist at the Seventh Day Baptist Center in Janesville, Wis.

However, Muriel's "real" work was as a pastor's wife and mother. Together, she and Paul served SDB churches in Nile, N.Y. (Paul was ordained there); Richburg, N.Y.; the Marlboro church in rural Bridgeton, N.J.; Little Rock, Ark.; Kansas City, Mo.; Nortonville,



Muriel Osborn
1926-1997

Kan.; and Dodge Center, Minn. Their last pastorate was Albion, Wis. They worked side by side, doing Bible clubs, nursing home ministry, and calling.

Muriel loved children. She worked with Child Evangelism, and directed children's conferences at

the annual General Conference sessions. She also was a prayer warrior. If Muriel said she would pray about a matter, you could be sure it was brought before the throne of grace. Pastor Paul said that Muriel was a "Mary" while he was a "Martha."

Survivors include her father, Floyd Sholtz, of Verona; four sons, Phillip of Frederick, Md., Joel of Cottage Grove, Wis., Timothy of Dodge Center, and Stephen of Lost Creek, W.Va.; one daughter, Karen Payne, of Claremont; one sister, Joyce Burdick of Sherrill, N.Y.; two brothers, Robert Sholtz of El Cerrito, Calif., and Louis Sholtz of Oneida, N.Y.; and 11 grandchildren. In addition to her husband, Muriel was preceded in death by her mother and two grandchildren.

Memorial services were held in Dodge Center and Albion. Muriel's cremated remains will be buried in Verona.

(This letter from Pastor Chris Mattison, Salemville, Pa., was shared at Muriel's memorial services. Her family felt that it captured the sentiments of so many cards and remembrances sent to Muriel.)

March 17, 1997

Dear Muriel,

I heard through the grapevine that things haven't been going well lately. I miss the cheery sound of your voice on the telephone at the Center. Just your warm, simple "hello" at the other end of the line has often been a ministry to my heart.

I just wanted to write and let you know that someone is praying for you out here in Pennsylvania. I've no doubt that there is a legion of individual souls holding you up before God's throne, pleading for His mercy to enfold you.

My personal prayer is that God fills your heart with a deep peace and contentment in the knowledge that He is faithful in His watch over you, and that He constantly reminds you of the nearness of His presence.

Whether you know it or not, you have been a shin-

ing light for me, Muriel. Starting at Summer Institute, you sparkled like a star in the darkness with your gracious smile and gentle humor. I'm sure you never knew how much you taught me about the graciousness of Christ by the example of your daily living.

God has been kind by giving me the pleasure of becoming acquainted with you. I have a feeling that there are many others whose lives have been touched by the Lord through you in just as sweet a way.

I've no doubt the crown being fashioned for you will be a special delight to behold for all the saints to see. And when the time comes for us all to cast our crowns before Him, yours will add much loveliness to that wonderful sight.

Dear friend, may our Gentle Healer hold you tightly and lovingly in His arms as you face the coming weeks and months. Thank you for being you and for warming so many of my days. I'll be thinking of you in prayer.

Your Friend & Brother In Christ,

Chris