

The

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abbath

News for and about
Seventh Day Baptists

January 2004

R

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Church Planting



*Looking for
the right soil*



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:

- salvation by grace through faith in Christ Jesus.
- the Bible as the inspired word of God. The Bible is our authority for our faith and daily conduct.
- baptism of believers, by immersion, witnessing to our acceptance of Christ as Savior and Lord.
- freedom of thought under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- the congregational form of church government. Every church member 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 our Lord. It is the joy of the Sabbath that makes SDBs just a little bit different.

If you would like more information, write: The 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 and the SDB Web site: www.seventhdaybaptist.org

Conference 2004 Daily Bible Study Schedule

Monday—“*God’s Kingdom Is Like...*”

Mark 10:10-12, 26-34; Matt. 13:13-17, 31-33; Luke 10:23-24, 13:18-19

Tuesday—“*God’s Kingdom Is Near*”

Mark 1:14-20, 8:31-9:1; Matt. 4:17-22, 16:21-28; Luke 5:2-11, 9:22-27; John 1:35-42

Wednesday—“*Being Prepared*”

Matt. 25:1-13

Thursday—“*Teach These Things*”

1 Tim. 4:1-16

Friday—“*Children in the Kingdom*”

Mark 10:13-16; Matt. 19:13-15; Luke 18:15-17

Daily Preaching Schedule

Sunday—“*God’s Plan for You*” (First Things First) Jer. 29:11-14a; Matt. 6:33

Monday—“*God’s Kingdom Is Within You*”
Luke 17:20-27

Tuesday—“*Success in God’s Kingdom*”
Matt. 25:14-30

Wednesday—“*Living in God’s Kingdom*”
Luke 14:25-33

Thursday—“*Working in God’s Kingdom*”
Deut. 8:1-18

Friday—“*Lord’s Supper*” 1 Cor. 11:17-26

Sabbath—“*Seeking God with All Your Heart*” Isa. 40:12-31; Psa. 63:1-8

Missionary Society Annual Meeting



The annual meeting of the members of the Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society will be held at the Pawcatuck SDB Meeting House, 120 Main St., Westerly, R.I., on Sunday, March 21, 2004, at 2:00 p.m. for the following purposes:

To elect voting members, a Board of Managers, and officers to hold office until the next annual meeting and until their successors are elected.

To hear and act upon the reports of the Board of Managers and officers for the fiscal year January 1, 2003, to December 31, 2003.

To ratify the appointment of independent public accountants for the current fiscal year.

To consider and act upon such other matters as may properly come before said meeting or any adjournment thereof.

The Board of Managers has fixed the close of business on February 27, 2004, as the time at which members entitled to notice thereof and to vote at the meeting and any adjournment thereof shall be determined.

—Cindy L. Nadeau,
secretary

The Sabbath Recorder

Establ. 1844



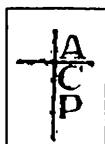
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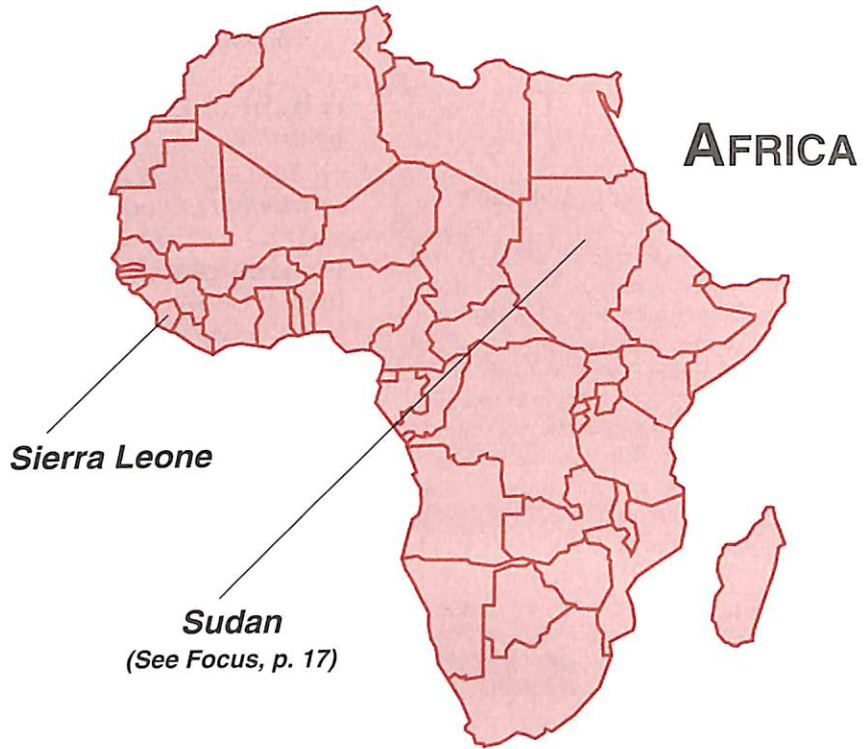
Sierra Leone: Anxious to get to work

by Kirk Looper

Located on the northwestern coast of Africa and nestled among a group of small countries, Sierra Leone covers an area about the size of West Virginia (USA). With a high percentage of non-Christians, the traditional African religions are predominant, followed closely by Islam.

However, we believe that the work of Seventh Day Baptist churches in Sierra Leone will increase the number of Christians in that country, and we look forward to hearing of this expansion as they do more outreach. Let's pray that their plans come to fruition and that they are able to minister to the community of the unsaved.

The General Secretary of the SDB Conference in The Gambia, Kwabena



country's people and advised them to get in touch with the SDB Missionary Society in Westerly, R.I.

We were pleasantly surprised to hear from Pastor Isaac Kposowa and

ences between Seventh Day Baptists and other denominations.

They were pleased with the materials we sent and began organizing their Conference. Pastor Kwabena was also available to advise them and answer additional questions.

One area of outreach for the Sierra Leone SDBs is in the schools. They currently have a couple of schools that need funds. They would like to build additional schools so that more children can attend classes closer to home. Like in The Gambia, they name a school after the individual or group which sends enough money to ensure that the school stays open the entire school year. This amounts to \$3,000 annually.

Presently, our brothers and sisters in Sierra Leone are waiting for tracts, handbooks, manuals, hymnals, and Bibles to give to new converts. This will help them greatly in evangelism.

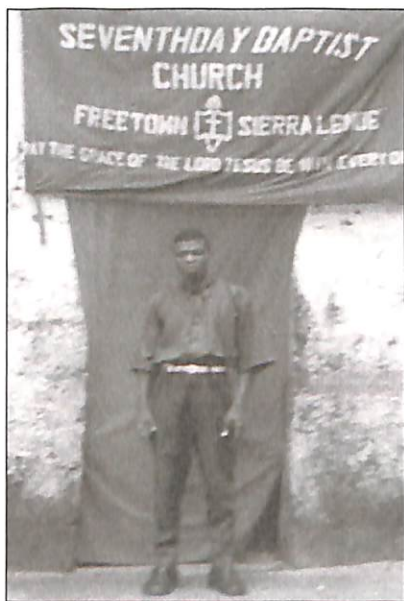
We believe that the work of Seventh Day Baptist churches in Sierra Leone will increase the number of Christians in that country, and we look forward to hearing of this expansion as they do more outreach.

Opoku, was instrumental in establishing churches in Sierra Leone in 2002. While there on business, he introduced the denomination to that

quickly sent books, tracts, and study materials. These introduced our beliefs and helped answer questions. They also clarified the basic differ-

Since the Conference is located in Tengbeh Town, a suburb of Freetown, they have a new area for ministry and a great need for outreach materials.

Their work includes distributing religious literature, home visits,



Pastor Francis Gandah attends school in Freetown.



Part of a church choir.

Bible study, and evangelism meetings. As is usually the case, they are hard pressed for funds to carry out these activities.

Trips into local provinces to start new ministries have been highly successful. Through these forays, they can reach into other villages and rural areas and establish groups with the hope that they will eventually organize into SDB churches. Most of

to be translated and printed so that they can spread the Gospel even further. This could be done more easily and economically with a computer, printer, and photocopier, greatly increasing their outreach and effectiveness.

We look forward to visiting with the Seventh Day Baptist churches in Sierra Leone some time this year. We long to hear of their adventures,

***Our brothers and sisters
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this travel is done by foot or by using the costly public transportation.

As their outreach area expands, the need for clothes (both for travel and work) also grows. And they urgently need training manuals. Bible study and training materials need

and see the excitement of those who have gone out and witnessed to their neighbors. I'm sure that they will have many stories about how God has blessed them, and how He has shown that others need Him, too. **SR**



One of the SDB school choirs in Sierra Leone.



A light in the blackout: The Adams Center Revival

by Ron Elston, National Extension Minister

The Adams Center, N.Y., Seventh Day Baptist Church held a weekend Revival in August. The congregation and Pastor Dale Smalley planned the special services for months.

Towards the end of 2002, the church asked the SDB Missionary Society for help, and I agreed to conduct the Revival.

Prior to the event, they held a city-wide, door-to-door outreach, and manned a booth at the local fair to witness and invite people to the services. Much prayer and preparation went into this outreach for the Lord.

August was a difficult time for the Elston family. Our daughter,

I knew the Devil was not happy with my plans and threw everything at me to break my focus on the Revival.

Gail, was hospitalized in San Jose, Calif., and it was hard to leave home and concentrate on the work ahead of me.

To say the least, the trip to New York state was “interesting.” I traveled by car since I was scheduled to meet with Pastor John Brewer and his family at Emmanuel SDB Church in Louisville, Ky., on my return trip. The Lord truly blessed me with His protection and traveling mercies as I narrowly missed having three accidents.

I knew the Devil was not happy

with my plans and threw everything at me to break my focus on the Revival. This became very clear while driving on 390 just south of Rochester, N.Y.

A man in a blue SUV was following closely behind me. There was little traffic on the four-lane road, and I could not understand why he was “on my tail.” Suddenly, he passed and then slowed down right in front of me. A message written in the dust on his spare-tire carrier said it all: “I serve Satan,” it read. I immediately knew that I was on the right road, spiritually as well as physically.

As I neared Syracuse, I cut through some small towns rather than fight late afternoon traffic. I became concerned as cars blasted through traffic lights that apparently weren’t working. This happened in all of the towns I passed through, until I got to Interstate 81. When I finally arrived at the Adams Center parsonage, I learned that there had been a massive power outage.

You probably remember the news reports. Conditions all over the Northeast were chaotic. Motorists were stranded, many without fuel. I told the Smalleys that they might have a new household mem-



Pastor Dale Smalley (left, with Bible) prepares young people for baptism, including Elisha and Christopher Persons, and Nicole White.



A witness for Christ, ready to plunge into the icy waters of Sandy Creek. Pastor Smalley (left), Tiffany Persons, & David Murphy, church moderator.

ber if I couldn’t get back home!

Later that evening, power was restored to the Adams Center area, and we conducted the Revival services. I was blessed to witness five baptisms before returning home.

Being faithful and obedient to God’s work is not always easy, but it is greatly rewarding. What a blessing to see lives changed! I learned that in the darkness—even in a blackout—the Light of Jesus is always shining. The missionary journey to Adams Center blessed me abundantly. **SR**

Church planting— Do we need new churches?

by Ron Elston

While Jesus was on earth, he advanced the ideas of planting, sowing, and reaping. Today, in a time where leaders have romanced the ideas of church mergers, not church “planting,” the question remains: “Do we need new churches?”

Church planting has become a bad term to some who feel threatened by new growth. Some have said it is “denominational empire-building,” rather than the mission of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe that church planting is central to the total mission of the Church. It needs to be taken seriously because the need for new churches in America is enormous.

I live in the Midwest Bible Belt, and I see small rural churches closing at an alarmingly rapid rate. It is true that most communities in America appear to be well-churched. But because church buildings have existed for years, and their doors are open to anyone who wants to attend, one tends to think that more churches are not needed. This is not true.

America is one of the largest mission fields in the world. It is necessary that the church reach out into every segment of society with fellowships, Bible studies, and new churches if the spiritually lost in America are to be brought to a personal faith in Jesus Christ.

Birth and growth are the rhythm of life, just as living and dying. Children grow up, people are transferred



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and move away, communities change, churches grow old and die while new communities spring up in all directions. We must constantly plant new churches.

Every living thing owes its life to a similar living thing which reproduced. The human race would die out if all reproduction ceased. Will the process of church planting end with us? Or will we reproduce so that others may have this wonderful privilege of knowing Jesus Christ and the joys of fellowship shared among believers?

Every Protestant church likes to believe it is a “New Testament

church” and does things in a biblical way. Is your church *really* New Testament if it isn’t planting churches?

To be like a person means to look like and act like that person. Being a real New Testament church means believing and doing what the New Testament church did. In Jesus’ day, the Church was concerned with, engaged in, and successful at planting new churches. They sprang up in Judea, Samaria, Antioch, and in city after city all around the Mediterranean area.

You don’t have to be a “mega” church to plant a branch. The New Testament church in Antioch planted



new groups at Cyprus and Asia Minor. They laid hands on Paul and Barnabas and sent them out as missionaries. That is what we, as Christians, should be doing.

How can your church prepare for church planting? *“And seeing the multitudes, Jesus had compassion on them, for they were helpless and scattered as sheep having no shepherd” (Matt. 9:36).*

Church planting begins with a conviction that grows into an acute awareness of the people who are lost without Christ.

The Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society will be happy to assist your church or Association in planning strategy for church planting. Every SDB church, large or small,

Church planting begins with a conviction that grows into an acute awareness of the people who are lost without Christ.

should have a Church Planting Committee and seek to reach out into the community with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Many SDB churches are small and cannot fully support a new work. In this case, other churches or an Association may work together. The most important thing is that we do our best and leave the results to God.

Another function of the Planting Committee may be to locate a meeting place. No new church should be burdened with a big building debt that might destroy their ministry's focus. New groups have met in members' houses, mobile homes, storefront buildings, motel conference

rooms, chapels, etc. There are many possibilities!

A third task would be to cultivate the field. This may be done by home Bible study, fellowships, seminars, Vacation Bible Schools, etc.

Most new groups start with only a few members, so a sponsor is very important. Just like a newborn infant, a new church needs to be properly nurtured and allowed to grow into adulthood.

In most cases, the question is not, “Can we plant a new church?” Rather, it is, “Are we willing to utilize what God has given us to help reproduce churches in His Kingdom?”

We may be a small denomination, but God has preserved a people called Seventh Day Baptists for a reason. We have tools available for church planting, and each year the National Missions Department of our Missionary Board offers a week-long intensive training school in the basics of church planting.

In the last three years, a number of people have attended and graduated from this program. Some are pastors, some are exploring their call to church planting, and others are church lay-leaders and denominational leaders. Yet all have felt a need to know more about planting churches for the Kingdom. Several new churches have been planted as a result of this course, and others are in the process of being established.

If you are interested and would like additional information on how your church or Association can receive this training, contact me at the National Missions Office, PO Box 105, Fairdealing, MO 63939. Phone:

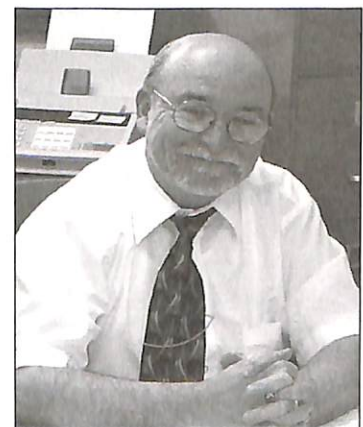


Participants in the 2003 Planters School.

(573) 857-2764. You may also contact the Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society in Westerly, R.I.

D.L. Moody once said, “The world has yet to see what God will do with and through and in and by the man who is fully and wholly consecrated to him... I will try my utmost to be that man.”

Can you imagine what could happen if your church adopted this philosophy? Many doors are open to Seventh Day Baptists for church planting. God has already gone before us, preparing the way. Now, we must decide: Will we follow the leadership of God's Holy Spirit, or will we remain behind and fade into history? The decision is up to you and your church. **SR**



Ron Elston, National Extension Minister

Ministry interruptions

A mission to the Philippines

by Rodney Henry

Ministry is made up of the interruptions that take place while we live our lives for God.

As I read the Gospel accounts of Jesus' life, I am struck by the fact that his ministry was full of events that took place while he was going someplace *else* to do ministry. Jesus' ministry seems to be a string of interruptions while living a life of ministry for his Father.

One example involves the healing of blind Bartimaeus. This event, recorded in Mark 10:46-52, took place as Jesus and his disciples were leaving the city of Jericho.

Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (that is, the Son of Timaeus), was sitting by the roadside begging. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called to the blind man, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you." Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus. "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him. The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see." "Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.

Jesus on a mission

We can assume that Jesus did the usual teaching, preaching, and healing while he was in Jericho. But this event took place *as* or *while* they were leaving the city with a large crowd following.

Bart knew that this Jesus was no ordinary man; he healed the sick and even raised the dead. Bart thought, *If he could do that for others, he could heal my blindness.* So he began shouting, "Jesus, have mercy on me."

**Jesus' ministry
was full of events that
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someplace else to
do ministry.**

Bartimaeus was a blind beggar who sat by the roadside as the crowd approached. For "Bart," a large crowd meant the possibility of extra begging money. But as the group drew closer, he heard that Jesus of Nazareth was in their midst.

Jesus' "handlers" rebuked Bart for trying to get the Master's attention. After all, Jesus had *important* things to do, didn't he? But this did not stop Bart. He kept shouting and finally got Jesus' attention. Human need always got Jesus' attention because he was

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Participants at the seminar on Sabbath theology and SDB history and polity.



sensitive to others and sensitive to his Heavenly Father.

Jesus had a full life and ministry, but he lived that life being sensitive to ministry opportunities that came his way. Jesus was not just leaving Jericho. He was on

The interruption

When the beggar finally approached the Savior, Jesus knew exactly what the problem was, but he still asked.

“What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus said.

I enjoy teaching Sabbath theology because it involves Bible study, and we spent three days covering the subject.

his way to Jerusalem to die on the cross for the salvation of the world. With so much on his mind, he was still sensitive to the ministry openings that came his way, even while he was accomplishing the most important purpose ever completed.

The question was simple, and the answer was equally simple: “I want to see,” Bartimaeus replied.

With that exchange, Jesus declared, “Go, your faith has healed you.”

One can only imagine the change that took place in Bartimaeus’ life

because Jesus took time from his important ministry of saving the world to heal him. Jesus was sensitive and willing to be *interrupted in ministry* in order to do *more* ministry.

Accepting God’s call

After returning from a missions trip to Serbia, I received a phone call from Kirk Looper, Executive Director of the SDB Missionary Society. He asked if I would be willing to go to the Philippines (at the Society’s expense) to teach Sabbath theology, history, and polity to a new crop of Filipino pastors.



Current SDB leaders in the Philippines (l. to r.): Manny Salera, Pastor Al Paypa, and Bernardo Agudera.



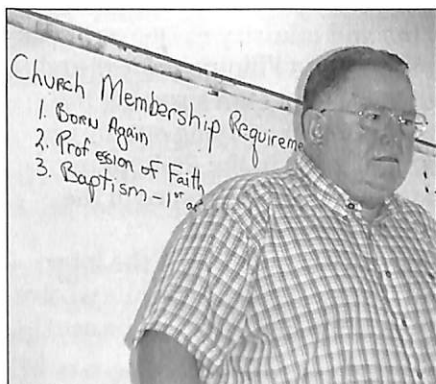
The Bankal SDB Church on Sabbath morning.



Rodney Henry (right) with Pastor Eleazar Ferraren, founder of SDBs in the Philippines.

I am the very happy and contented pastor of the most wonderful church in America—the Denver, Colo., Seventh Day Baptist Church. Going to the Philippines would be another major interruption in my life and ministry.

Though I was eager to see old friends there, I was not eager to spend 25 hours—each way—in airplanes and airports. I was not eager to be away from my church, family, and life. But ministry is what takes place while you are doing other ministry. God was calling me to go to the Philippines, so I accepted the call of this interruption.



At the polity seminar.

To teach and preach and teach

I left for the Philippines on November 2, 2003. The purpose for my trip was clear: I would spend three full days (morning to evening) teach-

ing Bible study, and we spent three days covering the subject. My book, *The Sabbath: God's Creation for Our Benefit*, had been translated into Cebuano in time for the seminars.

**No program is
“one size fits all,” but the
principle and purpose of SCSC can
apply about anywhere in the world.**

ing Sabbath theology. Then I would have a Sabbath rest after spending the morning preaching in one of the churches. Finally, I would spend the last three days teaching history and polity. This would be followed by teaching the principles of the Summer Christian Service Corps (SCSC) so that they could start their own version of the program.

Pastor Al Paypa had done a magnificent job of planning and preparing for the seminars, and everything was ready. About 25 pastors and church leaders attended. I enjoy teaching Sabbath theology because

On Friday, we finished studying Sabbath theology. I then agreed to speak at both of the churches in Cebu. This would not be the Sabbath rest for my body and voice that I had hoped for.

On to history and polity

On Sunday morning, I started teaching SDB history. They had translated SDB Historian Don Sanford's book, *Conscience Taken Captive*, into Cebuano, and Pastor Paypa had asked me to write a history of Seventh Day Baptist churches in the Philippines. After receiving a two-foot high pile of documents from the Missionary Society, I wrote a four-page history, which I presented with Pastor Ferraren.

Although we documented the past separation between two Seventh Day Baptist groups in their country, we also demonstrated their reconciliation and current friendship to all who were present. I believe the work in the Philippines is progressing through greater trust and cooperation. They are now operating as a single organization called, “The Seventh Day Baptist Churches in the Philippines.”

Prior to arriving there, I wrote a condensed *Manual of Procedures for*

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After church in Cebu City on Sabbath afternoon.



the Seventh Day Baptist Churches in the Philippines. During each lecture, I would teach polity from that *Manual*.

The goal was for them to learn the principles of polity and then revise their *Manual* to fit their understanding and organization of the church.

**For one man,
my main purpose
for the trip was
different than
I had planned.**

They would also develop processes and procedures that reflect the way they do things. They were excited to apply these principles to their setting and create their own *Manual of Procedures*.

And finally, SCSC

My final purpose would be accomplished when I taught them the basics of our Summer Christian Service Corps program. No program is "one size fits all," but the principles and purpose of SCSC can apply about anywhere in the world.

They were very excited about the possibilities that SCSC presents to their work in the Philippines. They could see what dedicated service would do for the maturity of their young adult workers, the future good of the "sending" local church, and the ministry potential in the "receiving" local church. They understood the principles of SCSC, and we discussed how to apply those principles to their setting.

Money is going to be an issue for the future of this program in the Philippines. But, by American standards, the cost would be an inexpensive investment in the lives of Filipino young people.

**The purpose
before me**

My purpose and focus for this trip was to teach Sabbath theology, history, polity, and SCSC. I always kept my purpose before me so that I would not lose my focus. I had seen Sabbath day as a kind of break in fulfilling my purpose, a break for my mind and voice from all-day lectures.

But for one man, my main purpose for the trip was different than I had planned. Ben Sagario was one of my old friends from my days as a missionary in the Philippines. He had been active in the ministry of Seventh Day Baptists for over 20 years.

On that Sabbath morning, I finished my sermon with an invitation to receive Jesus as Savior. Four or five people made commitments to



Ben Sagario (far right, with songbook) would come to accept Jesus at this church service.

Interruptions have a purpose

I trust that the interruption in my life and ministry in Denver made a difference to Filipino pastors and church leaders. I am sure that the interruption in carrying out my purpose and focus in the Philippines made an eternal difference in the life of Ben Sagario.

Ministry is made up of the interruptions that take place while we live our lives for God. We must be sensi-

**Ministry is made
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our lives for God.**

accept Jesus into their lives. To my surprise, one was Ben Sagario.

After the service, Ben came up to me and said that he had really been "put off" by the Christian church. Every church claimed to have the truth and be the truth. But that morning, he was not confronted by truth as an accurate statement of doctrine. He was confronted by the person of Jesus, who *is* the Truth! Ben accepted the Lord at the age of 65 after being "a part" of the church for decades.

tive to God and sensitive to those around us, so that we can live our lives from one ministry interruption to another.

It was a ministry interruption that made a difference in the lives of Bartimaeus and Ben Sagario. Don't neglect to take advantage of ministry interruptions while you live *your* life for God. **SR**

*Former missionary Rod Henry
pastors the Denver, Colo., SDB
Church.*



Last tidbits from Conference reports

Here is the last installment of local SDB Women's Society reports from this year's General Conference:

"For I was an hungred [hungry], and ye gave me meat [food]: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me" (Matt. 25:35-40).

Shiloh, NJ

We again sent "goodie boxes" to college students, and remembered shut-ins and others with cards, visits, meals, and flowers.

Dodge Center, MN

We sent boxes of "goodies" to our church's college-age young adults. These contained a variety of baked and purchased items. During the year, our group twice served Meals on Wheels to the elderly and disabled members of our community. (Local churches take turns doing this, two weeks at a time.)

Hebron, PA

Our service projects included making fleece afghans/"throws" for chemotherapy patients to use during their hospital treatments and later at home; twice providing cookies and serving coffee at the hospital's Long Term Care Unit; distributing cookies and poinsettias to shut-ins at Christmas; and furnishing layette items to needy mothers in the hospital's OB Unit.

Plainfield, NJ

We have supported ill women through expressions of care, and with

prayer and visits. Our best successes have been in the field of fellowship, welcoming into our church even the home health worker who made our treasurer's life so comfortable and safe during her last days.

"And above all things have fervent love [charity] among yourselves: for love [charity] shall cover the multitude of sins" (Prov. 10:12). "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Peter 4:10).

Ashaway, RI

We are grateful and hope to continue in an always "upward-looking" fashion.

Alfred, NY

We pray that the problems we have faced will be settled this year so that we can continue the Lord's work. We know that He is blessing our work here in Alfred. How else could so few do so much? We pray we can continue reaching out to others in Christ's love.

Riverside, CA

God is good to us. We are grateful that we can accomplish all of this with our small group (eight to nine ladies).

Hebron, PA

Pray that we remain faithful in our study of God's Word and that we continue to serve in His name for His glory.

Plainfield, NJ

We've had a year of great sadness

and great joy. Within our limited treasury, we provided thank-you gifts for our sexton and organist. God has been with us and has guided us through the year. We regretfully inform the church body of the loss of two key workers—Margret Armstrong, a former vice president of our society who died recently, and Etta O'Connor, who died earlier this year. Despite her failing health, Etta ably executed the office of society treasurer, even hosting meetings in her home when she was unable to get out. Both of these women were long-standing members, and their loss will be felt keenly.

Albion, WI

Attendance has become more open with actual membership less distinct. Projects were varied and affected many—from our own families and friends, to our community and the denomination. We continue our "secret sister" project, and gave a monetary gift to our pastor's wife, Jill Burns, to use at General Conference. Our Kids' Club still meets on Friday nights, and we've entertained them with a pizza party. We rejoice in the support our society receives.

Daytona Beach, FL

Our study was on "Women of the Bible." There is joy in serving our Lord as we strive to live in Christ. **SR**

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'" (Acts 20:35).



Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof....

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in the Bill of Rights guarantees this fundamental right, yet through the years it has been repeatedly challenged.

In 1888, the Blair Bill was introduced into Congress, decreeing “that no person shall perform any secular work on the first day of the week in any territory district, vessel, or place subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the United States.”

Seventh Day Baptists were among those most concerned about the intent and application of such a restrictive law, for they had experienced firsthand the effects of what were often called “blue laws.”

Pennsylvania was one state that continued to enforce such laws, dating back to the “Frame of Government of the Province of Pennsylvania” printed in 1682.²

Article XXXV in this document promised that all persons who believe in God and live peaceably and justly in Civil Society “shall in no ways be molested or prejudiced for their Religious Persuasion or Practice in matters of Faith and Worship, nor shall they be compelled at any time to frequent or maintain any Religious Worship, Place, or Ministry whatever.”

Yet Article XXXVI affirmed “That according to the good Example of

Blue laws’ blues

the Primitive Christians, and for the case of the Creation, every First Day of the week called the Lord’s Day, People shall abstain from their common Labour, that they may the better dispose themselves to Worship God according to their Understanding.”

This frame of Government concerning the observance of Sunday was reinforced by a Sunday Law

the arrest of some of the members of the German Seventh Day Baptist Church in Snowhill, Pa., in 1846. They were arrested and jailed for “putting in hay” on Sunday while some of their neighbors, who observed no day, weren’t bothered.⁴

In 1877, a legal judgment was made in the case of *Commonwealth vs. Daniel Waldo* in Crawford County, northwestern Penn-

Seventh Day Baptists were among those most concerned about the intent and application of such a restrictive law.

which was passed in 1794. In practice, persons who had no religious affiliation were granted more freedom than those who observed a day other than Sunday.

Richard Bond of the Nottingham SDB Church in the Philadelphia area was drawn for jury duty. He served faithfully until Friday night, when he applied to the court to be discharged, stating that it was against the rules of his society—and against his conscience—to serve on that day.

The judge reportedly said, “They pretend to have scruples of conscience. I know them all—a set of hypocrites. We are obliged to hold court on Saturday, and he shall stay and do his duty, too.”

There is no record of Bond’s response, but it is thought that this was one of the reasons a number of the members of that church moved to western Virginia and founded the Lost Creek Seventh Day Baptist Church.³

The May 1993 *Pearls* documented

sylvania. Waldo, a member of the Cussewago SDB Church, was arrested for operating a planing mill and cultivating potatoes on Sunday.

The report showed that “the prosecution failed to show that any religious meeting was disturbed; in fact, there was no meeting within several miles. It was shown by the defendants that they were connected with the Seventh Day Baptists; that they religiously observed the seventh day as the Scripture Sabbath, abstaining on that day from all work.”

Waldo and his hired man, Albert Wood, were each fined \$4.00, and were told that they would be imprisoned if the fine went unpaid.⁵ On principle, both men served jail terms. The Waldo case received wide coverage and illustrated the injustice of Sunday laws.

The *Outlook and Sabbath Quarterly*, edited by Rev. A.H. Lewis, was regularly sent to about 55,000 ministers and libraries. A special issue in

cont. on page 25



SR Almanac

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

One year ago—January 2003

Missionary Society Executive Kirk Looper shares observations from a trip to Africa: a new solar electric system in Malawi; harsh unemployment conditions in Kenya; and the need for water and food in Zambia.

National Extension Minister Ron Elston reviews an evangelistic crusade in Toronto, Canada, and a new group in Kennewick, Wash.

Janet Thorngate promotes the upcoming World Federation sessions in Brazil.

The YF from Doniphan, Mo., raises money for Zambia, and the church holds a weekend revival with guest evangelist Tim Parsley.

Five years ago—January 1999

Features by Kirk Looper focus on a church-run school in The Gambia and a pharmacy in Rwanda.

Ronald Elston reports on a new training program for volunteer Dedicated Field Workers.

New SDB work develops near Durango, Colo.

Recent construction nearly doubles the size of the Salem, W.Va., church building.

Conference Host Committee describes the campus of Hope College in Holland, Mich.

Editor Kevin Butler points out the changes in this first, all-computerized issue.

10 years ago—January 1994

Kirk Looper of the Missionary Society reports on his visits to SDB missions in Zambia, Malawi, and Indonesia. Each Conference had its share of joys and struggles. He also promotes specific foreign and national projects.

Article shows that the Outreach Bible Church (Portage, Wis.) is busy doing what their name implies.

Ron Elston, Regional Field Worker for the Missionary Society, shares his testimony and journey of faith.

Editor Kevin Butler begins the reminiscing for this sesquicentennial year of the *Sabbath Recorder*.

25 years ago—January 1979

Lead article has Rev. Lester Osborn asking, "Tired?" He then offers the remedy of the Sabbath.

Irene Saunders challenges our evangelistic methods with "The Parable of the Fisherman."

The Evangelical Community SDB Church, Stanton, Calif., organizes in November. Randy Henry serves as pastor.

Pastor Paul Osborn is honored for his 25 years in the ministry; Pastor Marion Van Horn honored at his retirement in Daytona Beach, Fla.

The Battle Creek, Mich., church gears up to celebrate its 75th anniversary.

50 years ago—January 1954

A denominational committee on theological training concludes an important midyear meeting in Alfred, N.Y. The committee then meets with the SDB Commission to discuss its deliberations and recommendations.

Pastors Kenneth Van Horn and David Clarke tell of plans to reach souls for Christ in the Minneapolis, Minn., area.

Among the Christmas greetings received at the office, Editor Leon Maltby counts one from Pastor Johannes Bahlke of Hamburg, Germany, as especially meaningful. In Bahlke's handwriting was this verse by Margret Bosley:

"God give me sympathy and sense
And help me keep my courage high.
God give me calm and confidence
And please—a twinkle in my eye."

...where are we headed?

Pray for—

- our SDB witness around the world
- our short-term missionaries
- denominational boards and agencies
- lasting effects from year-end retreats
- our college and seminary students
- our evangelistic outreach and methods
- churches in the pastoral search process



“Friend, will you hear me?”

Through their early years, the two were inseparable. They had learned the same lessons, laughed at the same jokes, played the same sports, and imagined enjoying this close friendship for life. Each knew the other was different, separate; and yet their goals, the yearning of their hearts, kept them on the same path.

Then, one decided to betray the other. In a moment, all that had bound them together became detestable. For the betrayer, everything changed. The shared education was despised; the shared likes became thorns and darts; the shared games became marathon grudge-matches.

The cherished memories of the close friendship became coals that were stoked by the dreams of the night, and flames that burned brightly in those quiet moments of the day. Though they continued to live in the same small world, they who were inseparable became distant.

Years passed, and the betrayer could take the lingering pain and discomfort no longer. The shattered relationship needed to be eliminated. But how could that be done? The betrayer fled.

The shared small world was left behind, and tranquility was sought in a new place. With the visual and social reminders removed, the daily shock of the crushed friendship disappeared. At times, it seemed forgotten. And so, the betrayer felt relief, nearing the goal of removing that which had been broken.

However, the shattered relationship did not disappear. Even when the betrayer was removed from constant reminders and sought to fill his days with new memories and new friends, the former relationship still existed—and stayed broken.

Crushing, quashing, and tossing would not work. The truth became clear: to eliminate a shattered relationship, the relationship itself has to be fixed. Flight could never repair that which had been destroyed. Instead of running away, the betrayer would seek.

But seeking brought no relief, in itself. A simple relocation back to the shared small world only brought renewed pain. While the betrayer was careful not to be seen, watching the friend walk by, work, play, and live reinforced the separation caused by the betrayal. Silence stood between them like a smothering curtain.

Flight had failed to eliminate the relationship, and seeking, by itself, failed to restore. The betrayer knew where the friend was, what the friend did, and how the friend lived. Yet this information did not serve its purpose. Beyond seeking, the betrayer would have to reach through the silence and call out.

At first, the words were mouthed in the night: “Friend, will you hear me?” With no one around but the betrayer, the words fell on a deaf world.

Later, the words were whispered as the friend walked by. They still couldn’t be heard.

Eventually, seeking and calling combined. The betrayer fell at the feet of the betrayed and sobbed, “Friend, will you hear me?” And the betrayed, hearing the words and seeing the friend, reached down, lifted the one who had broken faith, and said simply, “I will hear you.”

The curtain of silence parted. The story of agony, anguish, pain, and misery was laid before the betrayed. Even as these words were spoken, the betrayer saw that the wounds were self-inflicted. As more words gushed forth, the situation intensified and diminished in fear.

Broken, humiliated, and utterly at peace, the betrayer proclaimed the value of restoring the shattered relationship, accepted responsibility for breaking faith, promised to forsake the misplaced goal that led to the betrayal, and offered to live a life that treasured what the friend treasured.

Gushing words slowed, first to a trickle, then to drips and drops. The one who had broken faith had sought out the friend, called out that name, forsook the reason for betrayal, and now held dear what the friend held dear. The betrayed forgave, and the broken relationship was no more. A restored relationship now stood in its place.

* * *

This is one model God has given us to describe how we can know Him. Seek; do not run away. Call out; do not remain silent. Forsake that which leads to betrayal; do not grasp or long for it. Return to God; He will forgive (Isaiah 55). **SR**



Sudan: Turmoil against the Church

by Kirk Looper

In traveling about the world, we find that many countries have a built-in antagonism against Christianity. Their particular dominant religion is exclusive, contrary to the desires of many of their inhabitants. Believing that their religion is the only one possible, the leaders demand that everyone in their country blindly follow it.

As Christians, we believe that our God is the only god Who exists. Individuals must understand that they need a personal savior and that Jesus was a willing sacrifice for their sins. Then, with a clear understanding of salvation, people are free to choose for themselves. We do not force beliefs upon one another; or, at least, we should not.

In Africa, Sudan is one of the countries that follows the Muslim religion, and they feel that everyone else should, too. They are not adept at expressing this in a loving way, and Christians often suffer the brunt of their zeal.

Therefore, it was surprising to hear from Pastor Gatwech Bithow Ker in September of 2002.

Pastor Ker, who lives in Sudan, asked for information about Seventh Day Baptists and how to start a church. After some initial questions and answers, he and others decided to launch a church. We sent books, tracts, and other materials to help them get started and began making plans to visit them. Joseph Jada Wani became the leader of this group and continues in that capacity to date.

We are pleased that they are trying to increase the number of our churches and members in Sudan. They sent us a list of goals and physical needs, and we were able to raise some funds to help them. However, a lot of work still remains, and they look forward to realizing their goals for Seventh Day Baptists in their country.

The church desires to grow, and they look to our Conference for help to support that growth with prayers as well as money. However, before beginning, they wanted a firm foundation for their beliefs.

Without appropriate basics, churches cannot prosper. I think of a crop planted on fallow soil in

an adverse climate. It needs a lot more preparation, care, and nurturing. With this basic foundation, the seeds will be able to germinate and thrive in a less-than-suitable environment.

The Sudanese congregations want to see our love for them in the form of relief. A civil war has displaced over 2 million people, many of whom live in "sackhouses." These homes are made of cloth and are located outside the large cities of northern Sudan. Looking at the work

ahead of them, they estimate a need of over \$200,000 to reach out and care for those in the sackhouse villages.

Starting in November of 2002, the Sudanese looked for places to meet and distribute food and clothing. However, the economy of Sudan is very shaky, and funds were unavailable to buy land or buildings, or even food and clothing.

The instability of the Sudanese economy prevents many from purchasing the barest necessities of life. They all look forward to when they can build schools, clinics, and churches for their members and those they are trying to reach out to. In these new structures, people will find shelter from the sun, sickness, intimidation, and loss of hope that comes in the aftermath of war.

In every country, "the pride" of the Conference is its headquarters. It is always interesting to see the faces of the church leaders as they show their buildings to visitors.

A permanent Conference structure establishes a promise of denominational stability and, in some countries, it is required for registration. To "outsiders," a headquarters is a discernible symbol of an organization and an established church.

Most of our Conferences want an established headquarters, but the majority are too poor to afford one. Let us pray that our SDB Conferences around the world will succeed in obtaining the funds to carry out their programs and reach their goals. **SR**

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the BEACON

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

January 2004

California fires

by Ryan Olson, Riverside, Calif.

750,000 Acres Burned. 3,400 Homes Destroyed. Twenty People Dead. Thousands Evacuated from Their Homes. These were just a few of the headlines appearing in newspapers all across California.

Firefighters worked around the clock to save as many houses as possible, while risking their lives to save those who initially refused to leave as flames engulfed their homes.

One of the many areas threatened by the fires was our very own Pacific Pines Camp. Although the flames missed the camp, it claimed many homes and businesses around it.

Many of the people in the Riverside Seventh Day Baptist Church have friends or family members who live in the flame-ravaged communities of the San Bernardino County forest and the San Diego County fire areas. They were taken to one of the 22 evacuation stations, or moved in with friends or relatives. These fleeing residents have since been allowed back up the mountain to see the damage the fire caused to their homes and the homes of friends.

Firefighters left loving notes on the doorsteps of families that still had houses. The "returnees" were

very grateful to the firefighters, not only for a job well done, but for the caring, heartfelt messages they left behind.

Many churches and businesses in the San Bernardino area pitched in to help. By offering their air-conditioned buildings to evacuees with breathing problems, these people didn't have to be outside in the smoke. The thick ash turned the sky red and black, causing breathing problems so severe that some required medical attention.

The San Bernardino County blaze is believed to be an arson fire, and a \$60,000 reward is currently being offered for any information leading to the arrest of the culprit(s).

In San Diego County, the fires were started by a lost hunter, who made a signal fire that got out of control. San Diego County police are still deciding whether or not to press charges.

Although these brutal fires caused chaos and panic across Southern



Lake Gregory, a place familiar to many Pacific Pines campers.

California, the state pulled together to support the firefighters and the victims. People donated money, blankets, food, and much more.

Members of the Riverside SDB Church visited the neighborhood on Halloween and collected items for the evacuees. We then went to the base of the mountain, where the supplies were hauled up the hill for the firefighters to use or given to victims at local shelters.

California suffered a great tragedy, but with the help of God, we pulled together to help people in need. All we can do now is to continue to assist these families—and pray that they have the supplies and shelter they require to survive. **SR**



Single Minded

by Paula Davis

"...that you may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord" (1 Cor. 7:35).

Called to be single?

"An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord's affairs—how he can please the Lord. But a married man is concerned about the affairs of this world—how he can please his wife—and his interests are divided. An unmarried woman is concerned about the Lord's affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world—how she can please her husband. I am saying this for your own good, not to restrict you, but that you may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord" (1 Corinthians 7:32-35).



I used to have trouble with the phrase, "Called to be single." You see, I have never felt that I was "called" to be single.

There are a number of circumstances that cause "singlehood." Some individuals have never married, some are widowed, and others are single following a divorce. Some singles have raised—or are raising—children, while others are childless.

Regardless of our circumstances, we all share a common bond: The Lord is the only spouse we have.

I was challenged recently to think about how much time I devote to dwelling on being single. How much time do I spend concerned about the spouse that God may have chosen for my future, and wishing that God would hurry up and give me what I want? Is it more than the time I spend concerned about what God would have me do today? Or the people He would have me min-

ister to? Or the lives He would have me touch?

Do we spend so much time wondering if we might be missing "Mr. or Mrs. Right" that we miss

As we see these blessings, moment-by-moment and day-by-day, we will begin to realize that we could never want for more than what God has for us right now.

**Being
unmarried is
not a punishment.
It is a gift from
God, and He offers it
new every day.**

the people God has placed in our lives as a blessing today?

Being unmarried is not a punishment. It is a gift from God, and He offers it new every day. Being concerned about how we can please a future spouse robs us, and those around us, of the blessings right before our eyes. And, more than that, being concerned about what may or may not be in our future is a sin. It is a slap in the face to God, indicating that somehow *we* know better than He does what is best for our lives.

We need to spend each day concerned with *His* affairs and learn to embrace them as our own.

Our loving Heavenly Father is waiting to pour out blessings into our lives, more blessings than we can ever imagine. But we must live today and allow ourselves to see these blessings, no matter how small: each smile from a friend or a stranger, each flower along our path, each victory.

It is my prayer that this periodic column will minister to those of you who are unmarried, no matter what your circumstances. Through embracing the challenges we share, my hope is that we will draw closer to each other and to the Lord, Who is waiting to be our spouse. He may not be sitting beside us physically, but He is "closer than a brother." **SR**

Lord, teach us how to live each day as a treasure from You. Thank You for each victory in our lives yesterday, and for those we will have today. Remind us when we're restless for what lies ahead to stop and spend more time with You, so that You can reveal to each of us the riches that are right in front of us—with a smile, a helping hand, or a silent prayer. May we not miss what You have for us today because we are too busy looking toward tomorrow.



The President's Page

by Dale Thorngate

Seeking God through forgiveness

Out of forgiveness comes reconciliation with God and with each other. Then, as in the parable, we "enter into the joy of our Lord."

"Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, 'Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?' Jesus answered, 'I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.' Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants..." (Matthew 18:21ff.)



Dale D. Thorngate

This is the time when many people make what we euphemistically call "New Year's resolutions." I wonder if the person who started this practice began with this passage of Scripture from Matthew? Before we can start the new year, it is important to be sure that we've dealt with last year's issues.

When Peter asks Jesus to confirm his understanding of forgiveness, he thinks that he is being pretty generous to offer seven times. Peter knew the rabbis' teaching that a man must forgive his brother up to three times. So, Peter must have been perplexed when Jesus set a much higher standard.

I don't know about you, but whenever I read this parable about forgiveness in the Kingdom of God, I get uncomfortable.

Yes, I say the Lord's Prayer at least weekly and understand how God's forgiving of me depends upon my ability to forgive others. And I do remember that Jesus forgave those who sent him to the cross.

Nevertheless, it is difficult for me to think about *unlimited* forgiveness. That's what this Kingdom parable is all about. The number 77 is not meant to set up a way to "keep account"; it is one of Jesus' ways to get the attention of his listeners.

It is important for us as Christians—and especially as Seventh Day Baptists "seeking God with all our hearts"—to begin 2004 with a forgiving heart.

During this past Conference session, delegates considered the membership status of one of our churches.

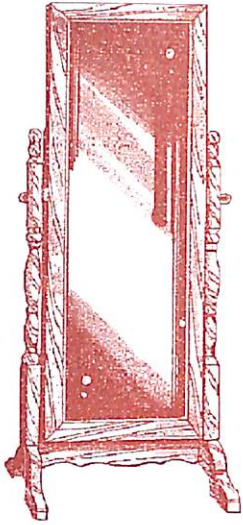
I believe that we were able to work through a very difficult situation because God gave us forgiving hearts. It pleased me that we could do that as a people of God.

I hope that all the individuals involved feel that God's will was done and that forgiveness was received by those who needed it. Out of forgiveness comes reconciliation with God and with each other. Then, as in the parable, we "enter into the joy of our Lord." That's what forgiveness is all about!

Jesus closes this passage in Matthew by saying, "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."

My prayer is that we can all begin this new year with a fresh start, seeking God's plans for our lives as individuals, as churches, and as a Conference.

We in the Salem, W.Va., SDB Church are doing a weekly Bible study of the passages in which Jesus taught about the Kingdom of God. Some of those references are listed inside the front cover for those who want to do a similar study as we seek God with all our hearts. Next August, Conference Bible studies and sermons will be drawn from these passages. **SR**



Reflections

by Leanne Lippincott

"Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face."—1 Cor. 13:12

Sleeping beauty

A bitterly cold wind blew me sideways as I exited my car. It was a blustery, bleak afternoon in late November. The low-hanging clouds hovered above me like a shroud.

Heading to the front door of the Milton (Wis.) SDB Church, the whirling leaves reminded me of the rose petals that flower girls scatter down a wedding aisle. But I wasn't attending a wedding.

Once inside, I hung up my coat and greeted the grieving grandparents. The only words I could get out of my mouth were, "I love you."

I carefully edged my way through the crowd and peered into the tiny open casket. My eyes fell on a perfectly formed infant, eight months along but stillborn after a car crash.

A little knitted cap gently framed Aurora Vignault's face. She looked like a sleeping doll, swathed in a cuddly warm blanket.

I signed the condolence book, then sat beside my daughter. Jennifer was already struggling to control her emotions. A few years earlier, one of her identical twin daughters died in utero. Leaning towards me, Jen whispered, "Mom, how can anyone look at that baby and not cry?"

The grieving family took their places at the front of the church. *What will Pastor George say?* I wondered. What could *anyone* say to ease such deep, overpowering grief? How could mere words comfort a mother who never heard her baby take a single breath?

Pastor Calhoun's opening words spoke to many hearts: "We gather today to remember not what was, but what could have been; to say farewell to one we have never met."

I glanced at the tearful women around me who had also lost chil-

***Both Princes
roused their
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and separation
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dren—or grandchildren—to illness, miscarriage, or premature birth. One mother's grief is another mother's grief. Seeing their tears, and the tears of their husbands, reminded me of Paul's wise admonition to "mourn with those who mourn" (Rom. 12:15).

In his funeral message, Pastor George talked about the fairy tale, *Sleeping Beauty*, and how the beautiful infant, Aurora, had been betrothed to Prince Philip. Cursed to die before her 16th birthday, she eventually fell into a deadly slumber.

"All seemed lost," Pastor George said, "but for the one glimmer of hope—a touch of true love could awaken her."

Both Auroras—Sleeping Beauty and little Aurora Vignault—had a Prince who pursued them; a Prince who was unwilling to let them go.

Both Princes, the pastor pointed out, roused their loved one from eternal slumber and separation with a touch of their love. Prince Philip awakened his Aurora with a kiss, and the Prince of Peace "awakened *our* Aurora from *her* sleep," Pastor George declared. "In a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, she rose in new life.... Our little 'sleeping beauty' arose to see her Prince and King, Jesus Christ!"

The service closed with the singing of "Amazing Grace."

As I watched the funeral director wheel the miniature casket back down the aisle, I could almost see angels scattering rose petals before it. For believers, it wasn't a funeral cortege; it was a triumphant victory procession, signaling the death of death while heralding New Life in Christ.

Walking back to my car, I could still hear the pastor's closing words: "Death is always difficult. But when we know what awaits us, we can face it with assurance and confidence." **SR**



Denver celebrates history

This past fall, the SDB Church of Denver, Colo., noted the 75th anniversary of its organization. Pastor Rodney Henry compiled this historical tribute which was presented at a fellowship meal.

The Denver Seventh Day Baptist Church owes its existence to faithful SDB men and women of God who, through many generations, carried the torch of the Gospel and the Sabbath. These pioneers carried their faith and spirit from our first church on this continent in Newport, Rhode Island, in 1671, to the frontiers of the western United States.

In the 1890s, Seventh Day Baptist services began in Denver. For several decades, the Boulder, Colo., church

provided pastoral leadership for the group meeting in Denver.

In 1925, Denver SDBs rented the Clough Methodist church at 22 Kalamath Street, but it wasn't until November 17, 1928, that the church was officially organized into a Seventh Day Baptist church. In 1930, using a loan from the SDB Memorial Board, they purchased the Clough Methodist Church building for \$3,000.

In 1959, the Denver church bought the current property at 2301 Wadsworth Blvd. in Lakewood. It had a home which could be used for a parsonage and enough land for a sanctuary, fellowship hall, and parking lot. The first building—the fellowship hall—was erected in 1960 and

initially served as the sanctuary. The current sanctuary was built and dedicated in 1969.

In 1963, Paul Hummel deeded over 236 acres of Rocky Mountain land on Lee Hill to the Denver and Boulder churches. Money was then secured from the SDB Memorial Board to make capital improvements. Every year, the SDB churches in Colorado provide a Christian camping experience at Camp Paul Hummel for children of all ages.

From its first meetings in the 1890s to its organization as a church in 1928, the Denver congregation owes its existence to the faithfulness of preceding Seventh Day Baptists. May God find *us* faithful in serving the cause of Christ until he returns. **SR**

Group makes it 'official' in Kennewick

November 15, 2003, was a special day in the life of a group of Sabbathkeepers in Kennewick, Wash. Nine charter members signed a covenant to organize as an official Seventh Day Baptist branch church, and to reaffirm their determination to spread the good news of the Gospel in their area.

Rev. Gabriel Bejjani felt honored to represent the General Conference at the event. Over 30 people attended the service, including the members and their friends and families. Bejjani reports that the worship service was meaningful and touching.

Marty Jackson was installed as the pastor of the new group, with Robert Youssef serving as associate pastor.

Pastor Jackson shared his testimony in the pages of the *Sabbath Recorder* several months ago. He has been the steady and willing servant who has carried the workload of this small flock. Nancy, Marty's wife, has



Robert Youseff (left) and Marty Jackson share the joy with outgoing Director of Pastoral Services Gabe Bejjani at the organizational service of the Kennewick, Wash., SDB Church.

been the faithful church pianist, secretary, social events coordinator, etc.

"Without Nancy's help," Marty shared, "I could not have done this."

Robert Youseff has been the "behind-the-scenes" supporter, and helps to lead the Sabbath worship when available. Youseff joined the

Riverside, Calif., SDB Church in 1978. He and his wife Barbara and their two sons now live in Kennewick.

Let us keep the church members in our prayers during this exciting time. May the Lord bless their ministry and witness for His glory. **SR**

Church goes to colleges—and restaurants

by Heather Rao

Last September, some friends from the Alfred Station (N.Y.) Seventh Day Baptist Church participated in “block parties” on the campuses of Alfred Tech and Alfred University. Attendees included Dawn and Curtis Palmiter, Corey Sanborn, Rachel and Amber Trudell (age 2), and Heather, Dan, and Eden (age 1) Rao.

At these promotions for the campuses and area activities, we handed out helium balloons with our church’s name on them, along with homemade cookies, tracts, and invitations to our church’s Sabbath School Rally. There was also a free chicken barbecue, Christian music blaring from a huge dance speaker, and a rack of DJ lights.

All of the Tech students had to attend the party or they were on their own for dinner. To receive the meal, they had to fill a card with stamps saying that they had visited at least 15 tables. Many of the students wanted balloons. (We could only imagine why.)

A few asked questions about our church. Answering them was fun! We’re sure that we saw some of the students more than once because our cookies were so “yummy.” We felt welcomed by the students.

The time at the University was also nice, but there was a definite twist to the evening because we were outside on a very chilly night.

None of these students took our cookies or balloons, and a few told us why they didn’t want to hear about our church: One claimed to be a pagan, another just didn’t want anything to do with our church, and a group of students said they were Catholic.

On a positive note, a group of gentlemen from Germany accepted two New Testament Bibles. They were excited to hear from our church because they had tried to attend our services the Sunday before. We ex-

plained that we go to church on Saturday. We haven’t seen this group at church yet, but maybe some day...

Later in the month, Reid and Phyllis Mattison attended a Pastors’ Luncheon at Houghton (N.Y.) College, where churches could set up tables and present their information. The couple shared that their time at Houghton was a wonderful experience.

Many young people stopped and talked to the Mattisons about the Alfred Station church. One young lady, whose family had been missionaries in Senegal, was especially interested. She visited our church and talked with all of our Sabbath School classes about her life in Senegal. She also shared at the worship service.

On Tuesday nights during the month of October, Friendly’s Restaurant invited our church to participate in a fund-raiser/family night. This

was yet another opportunity to witness for Christ.

Twenty people served as greeters at the restaurant in Hornell. Their jobs were to say “hello” with a big friendly smile, seat people, and hand out a brochure that we created. This publication offered a warm, inviting welcome, showed a picture of our facility, and listed the times of services. On the back, we shared the “Roman Road.”

Besides the benefit of sharing about our church, we received 10 percent of all of the money taken in from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. On one Tuesday night alone, our church made \$170.

The total amount raised by the Alfred Station SDB Church—thanks to our warm smiles and the folks at Friendly’s—amounted to \$600. “Thank you” to the many people who once again helped spread the Good News. **SR**

Osborns to leave for Africa



Jayme and Tim Osborn (in center with white blouse and suit) are the focus of a prayer of dedication as they graduate from the School of Frontier Missions, part of Youth-With-A-Mission/Northwoods in Weyerhaeuser, Wis. Their family is preparing to move to northern Africa for an extended mission.

New members

Albion, WI

Michael Burns, pastor

Joined by letter

John Bach

Salem, WV

Dale D. Thorngate, pastor

Joined after baptism

Amanda M.A. Smith

Joseph B. Spencer

Elisabeth A. Spencer

Ian F. Spencer

Jessica M. Talerico

White Cloud, MI

Bernie Wethington, pastor

Joined after testimony

Jackie Cruzan

Haywood Floyd

Angel Floyd

Lai Yin Wong

Marriage

Bergmann - Montgomery.—

David Bergmann and Aspen Montgomery were united in marriage on November 3, 2003, at the First Methodist Church in Huntsville, AL, with Rev. John D. Bevis, pastor of the bride, officiating.

New Directory

The Seventh Day Baptist Directory covering the year 2003 is now available at the SDB Center in Janesville, Wis.

The cost is \$8.75 per Directory, which includes postage. For those who pick up a Directory, the cost is \$7.50 each.

Local Church Attendance Contest slows down

Due to snowstorms in the East, and the flu out West, the surge in attendance has stalled this month. The cumulative numbers beyond the base average:

Alfred Station, NY 71
San Gabriel, CA 26

Please keep all of our churches in prayer as they reach out for the cause of Christ.

Robe of Achievement

The SDB Women's Society is accepting nominations for the Robe of Achievement for 2004. Please see the December *SR* for all the nomination requirements.

If an individual has been nominated before, and you still want that person considered, please resubmit the name, the resumé, and any new information.

Send submissions to:

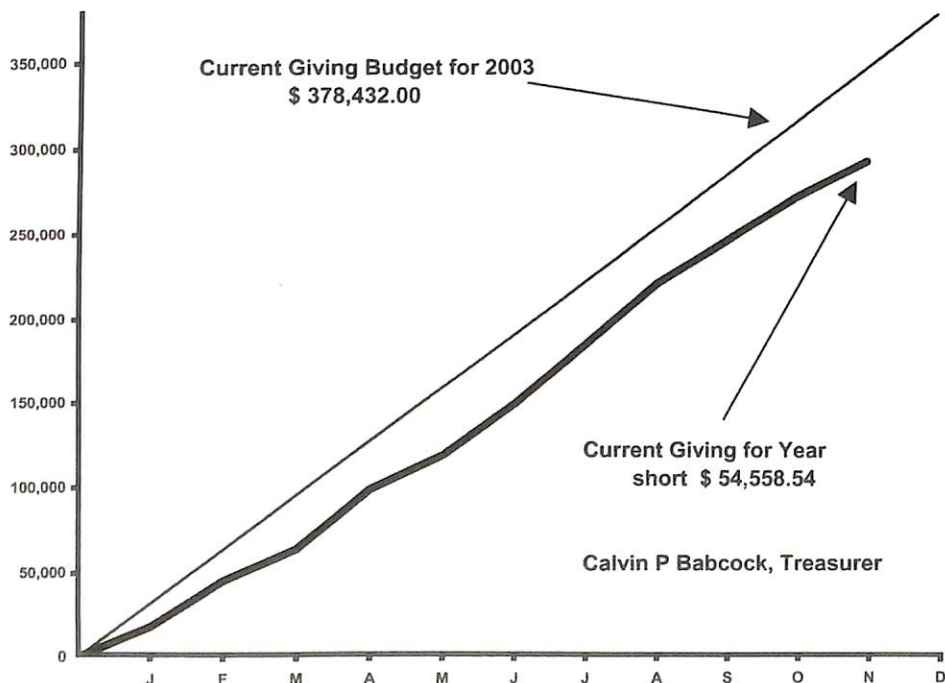
Robe Nominations
Audrey Fuller
908 N. Colonial Cir.
Daytona Beach, FL 32117

or apply on-line at
www.sdbwboard.org

◆◆◆

Deadline:
March 31, 2004

Current Giving 2003



Obituaries

Hill.—Alfred Hill Sr., 72, died on October 27, 2003, in Pleasanton, Calif.

He was born on April 28, 1931, in Indianapolis, Ind., the son of Frederick and Lillian Hill. He grew up in Wallingford, Conn., and joined the U.S. Air Force in 1948. Trained as a teletype operator, he was stationed at Hickam Field in Hawaii and Johnson Island in the Pacific prior to his discharge in 1952. He then worked in the banking field for 15 years in Connecticut.

On August 17, 1952, Alfred married Harriet Spencer and had three sons and one daughter.

Alfred moved to Daytona Beach, Fla., in 1970, where he worked for the Hill Company and that city's police department. In 1974, he enlisted in the Army Reserve and served at various bases teaching Morse Code

and radio transmission. He retired in 1994 as a Master Sergeant.

Alfred was baptized at the Pine Street Gospel Chapel in Middletown, Conn., and was a member of the Daytona Beach Seventh Day Baptist Church. In 1981, he married Lourdes Estrella and relocated to California.

In addition to his wife, survivors include his children, Alfred Jr. of Port Orange, Fla., Jeffrey of Middlefield, Conn., Jeannine Pickard of Ocean Springs, Miss., and Sidney of New Smyrna Beach, Fla.; one step-daughter, Angelina Santos; his first wife, Harriet Spencer; 15 grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren.

Services were held November 3, 2003, at the Wilson Family Funeral Chapel, Livermore, Calif., with Pastor Steven Crouch officiating. Burial, with military honors, was at Memory Gardens Cemetery, Livermore.

Death Notices

Stanley F. Davis, 105, of Lafayette, LA, died on November 16, 2003.

Arabeth DeLand, 85, of Battle Creek, MI, died on December 9, 2003.

Madelene Parrish, 82, of Battle Creek, MI, died on December 13, 2003.

Barbara White, 80, of Denver, CO, died on December 14, 2003.

Kenneth A. Babcock, 92, formerly of Milton, WI, died on December 16, 2003.

Blue law's blues, *cont. from page 14*

1889 dealing with the Blair Bill was also sent to 65,000 lawyers.

This effort to publicly detail the discrimination against Sabbath-keepers spurred on a petition drive to ask both houses of Congress to refrain from any attempt to pass the proposed Blair Sunday Law. The petition read:

We, the undersigned, adult residents of the United States, 21 years of age or more, hereby respectfully, but earnestly, petition your Honorable Body not to pass any bill in regard to the observance of the Sabbath or Lord's day or any other religious or ecclesiastical institution or rite; nor to favor in any way the adoption of any resolution for the amendment of the National Constitution that would in any way give preference to the principles of any one religion above another, or that will in any way

sanction legislation upon the subject of religion: but that the total separation between Religion and the State, assured by our National Constitution as it now is, may forever remain as our fathers established it.

The proposed legislation died in committee, but over 7,000 signatures were attached to the petitions, many of which were circulated by members of Seventh Day Baptist churches and later preserved.

In 1969, Jennie Wells, a Dedicated Service worker at the Denominational Building in Plainfield, N.J., collated and indexed many of these petitions. This massive volume contains the signatures of about 4,800 people, many of whom were the ancestors of present-day readers of the *Sabbath Recorder*. Heading the list are 205 Davises, 131 Burdicks, 112 Crandalls, 85 Clarkes, 81 Greens, 70

Stillmans, and numerous other family names familiar among Seventh Day Baptists. **SR**

'The origin of the term "Blue Laws" is not certain. One theory is that it was derived from the law books of Connecticut, including those restricting Sunday activities, which were bound in blue.

²"The Frame of Government of the Province of Pennsylvania in America Together with Laws agreed upon in England by the Governour and Divers Free-men of the aforesaid Province to be further Explained and Confirmed there by the first Provincial Council and General Assembly that shall be held if they see meet. Printed in the Year MDCLXXXII," p. 11.

³Seventh Day Baptists in Europe and America, Vol. II, p. 673-674.

⁴Sabbath Recorder, Vol. III, No. 4, p. 14, July 16, 1846.

⁵Sabbath Recorder, Vol. 33, No. 32, p. 2, August 9, 1877.

Give to those who gave so much.

PASTORS:

Leroy C. Bass C. Rex Burdick David S. Clarke John A. Conrod

Leland E. Davis Elmo Fitz Randolph Ralph L. Hays Sr.

Melvin G. Nida David C. Pearson Donald E. Richards

Don A. Sanford Victor W. Skaggs Trevah R. Sutton

Kenneth B. Van Horn Edgar E. Wheeler

OTHER RETIREES:

Ida Babcock Margaret S. Bond Mabel Cruzan

Ethel D. Dickinson Clarke Esther Lewis

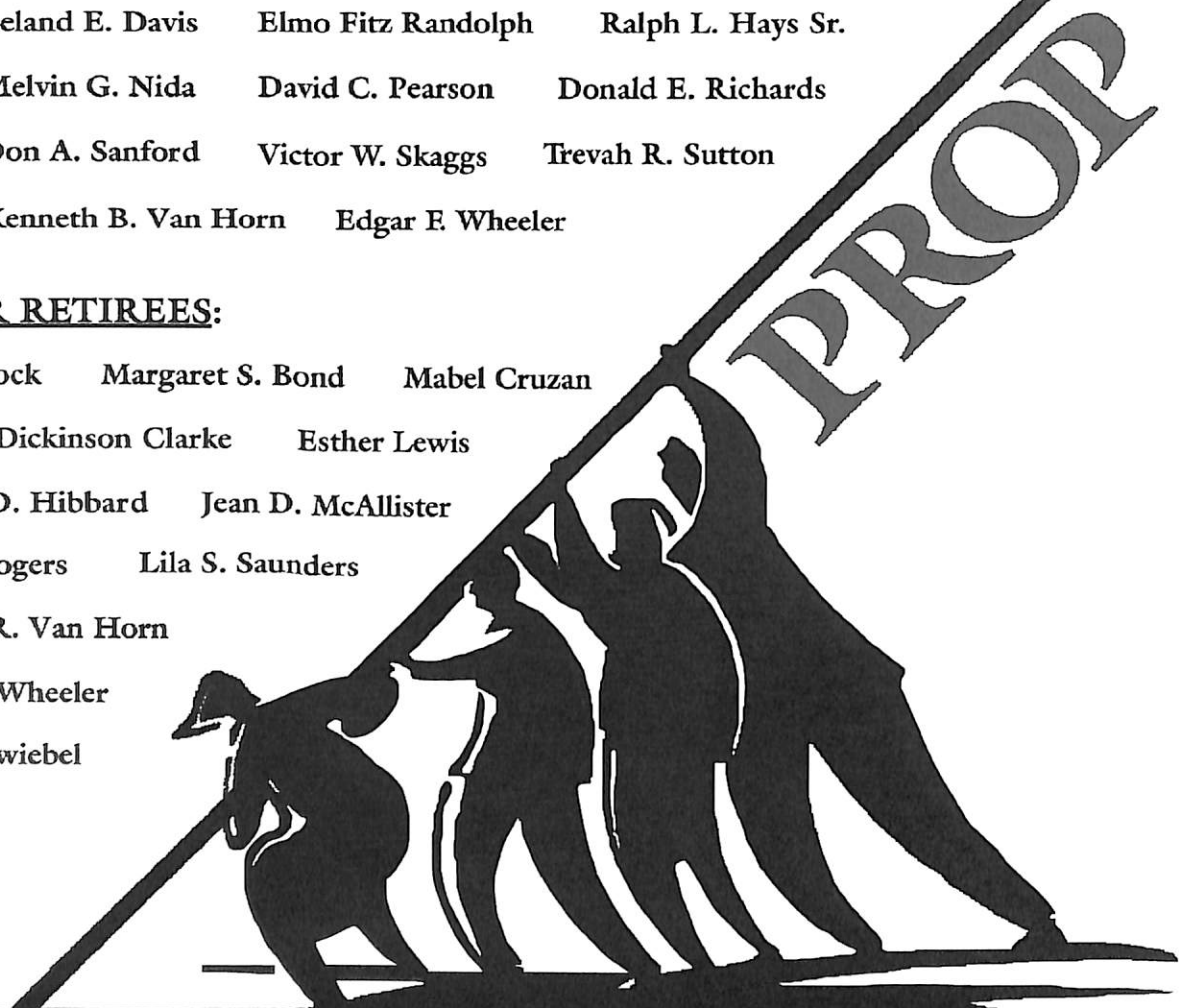
Beatrice D. Hibbard Jean D. McAllister

Janette Rogers Lila S. Saunders

Rowena R. Van Horn

Ethel M. Wheeler

Jaunita Zwiebel



Pastors Retirement Offering Project

Contributions are needed for continuing support of SDB retired pastors and denominational workers, and surviving spouses of pastors.

Please donate to PROP!

Please send your check to: PROP
Seventh Day Baptist Center, P.O. Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678

KEVIN'S

ORNER

This past fall, 2,511 families in a little corner of western New York State received a surprise in their mailbox: a special full-color issue of the *SR* called "Journey of a Lifetime."

A busy group of over two dozen friends of the Alfred Station, N.Y., church gathered for a "label-pasting and postage-attaching party." The publication was then mailed to addresses in and around Alfred Station, including the towns of Alfred, Almond, and Andover.

Reports are that the "Journey" has touched many lives. The church's *SR* correspondent, Heather Rao, shares some of the feedback:

- A man who works at the Family Life Radio Network commented on how nice the mailing was.
- A woman in our church has a morning exercise buddy, whose husband said that the SDB Church was just like them, "except that they happen to go to church on Saturday."
- A person who attends a local Sunday-keeping Baptist church said that he hopes the mailing "really shakes people up."
- The Vice President of Student Affairs at St. Bonaventure University left a phone message at the church, saying how inviting the magazine was.

"Distributing the *Journey* was something our members could collectively get involved in," Heather said. "Before beginning the outreach task, many of them didn't realize that it could have such an impact on surrounding communities."

Heather also wanted to thank all those who put forth the hard work to make the mailing a success. "Through it, we have helped open people's eyes to who Seventh Day Baptists are. In the process, we

may have also led them to belief in God as their Father."

Our Memorial Fund Finance Manager, Calvin Babcock, dropped in recently at the nearby Alfred SDB Church, and met a woman there who was also visiting. "She said that she had received the *Journey* mailing and was favorably impressed with it," Calvin noted.

Why all this talk about one of our publications? Thanks to the success in the Alfred Station area, the new *Sabbath Recorder* Committee has agreed to run a reprint of the same piece, first done in December of 2000.

"Journey of a Lifetime" is adapted from a story by J.W. Yurke. It contains a first-person narrative of a search for spiritual truth, involving other interesting people and events along the way.

Loaded with colorful illustrations and Scripture references laid out by artist Pat Cruzan, the magazine finishes by listing our SDB Statement of Belief and provides the necessary contact information.

The next "Journey" will take the place of February's regular issue. If you still have your copy from 2000, why not give away this new copy to a friend or neighbor? We are printing extras for individual and church outreach. (Please see the back cover for ordering information.)

Heather Rao of the Alfred Station church encourages all of our churches to become involved in a similar mailing.

"It's a lot of work, but well worth the effort."

May this Journey be to God's glory.



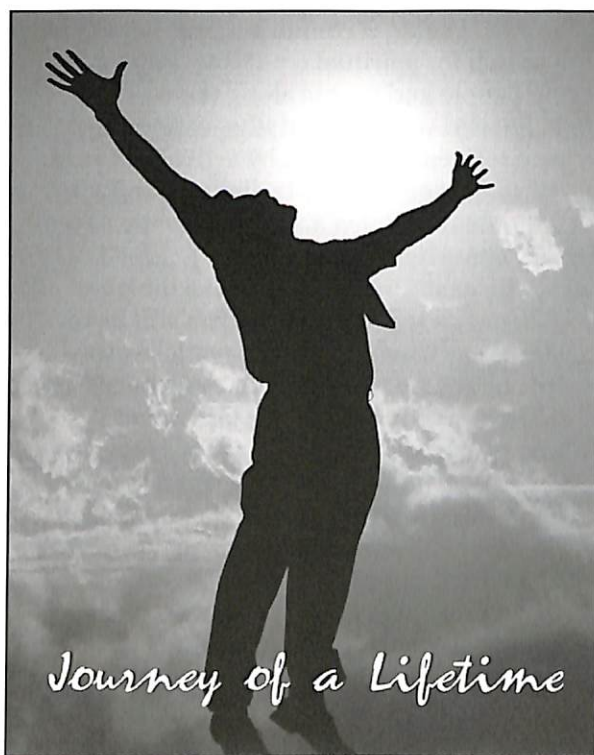
Sponsor a page!

Over the last several years, you might have noticed that some of our pages carried "sponsorship" lines. This year, we continue to offer that opportunity.

Your tax-deductible gift of \$125 will sponsor a page in the *SR* in memory or in honor of a loved one or special ministry.

Please make your check out to "The Sabbath Recorder," specify your honoree, and let us know if you want your name listed on the page. Thank you so much!

The Journey returns



*You may not recognize
your next Sabbath Recorder.
Due to popular demand,
we are reprinting the full-
color outreach issue first
done in December 2000.
Here's your chance to
share our beliefs in
an entertaining
story fashion.*

You may receive more copies of this special issue by contacting us at the Seventh Day Baptist Center, PO Box 1678, Janesville WI 53547. Our phone number is (608) 752-5055, and the e-mail address is sdbmedia@inwave.com.

Individual copies are free. We will need to add shipping charges for larger quantities. Please contact us for those costs.

We pray that the Lord will again bless this outreach effort, and many others will join us on our "Journey of a Lifetime."