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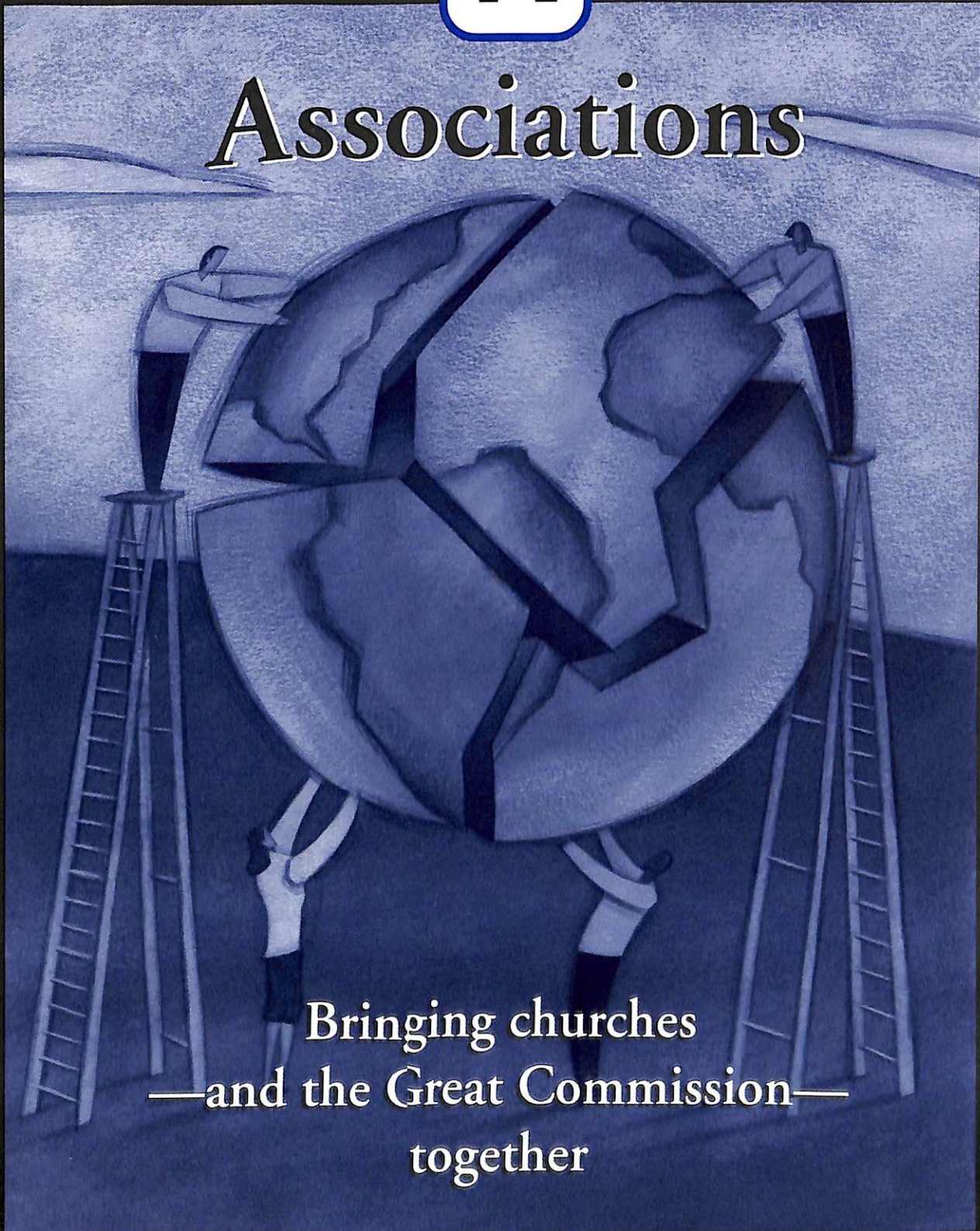
**S**abbath

News for and about  
Seventh Day Baptists

March 2004

**R**ecorder

# Associations



Bringing churches  
—and the Great Commission—  
together



## 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](mailto:sdbgen@inwave.com) and the SDB Web site: [www.seventhdaybaptist.org](http://www.seventhdaybaptist.org)

## Summer Institute on SDB History and Polity

**June 7 – 18, 2004**

Seventh Day Baptist Center  
Janesville, Wis.

Taught by  
Janet Thorngate  
and  
Gordon Lawton

Please contact Rev. Lawton  
for more information:  
(608) 752-5055  
[sdbcom@inwave.com](mailto:sdbcom@inwave.com)

## 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](http://www.sdbwboard.org)*

**Deadline: March 31, 2004**

## SDB Church Planters School

will be held at the  
SDB Center  
Janesville, Wis.  
May 24-29, 2004

\* \* \*

To register, contact the  
Missionary Society office  
(401) 596-4326  
[sdbmissoc@mindspring.com](mailto:sdbmissoc@mindspring.com)

## Open the Door in 2004!

*Come to Shiloh a little earlier!*

If you are planning to attend Sabbath morning worship at the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Shiloh, New Jersey, please take note that our worship service now begins at 9:45 a.m.

Sabbath School classes will immediately follow worship.

In this new year, we are trying a new service time in hopes to attract more people to come and experience the benefits of being part of a church family.

"Open the Door in 2004" is our theme as we invite people to become a part of our church family.

# The Sabbath Recorder

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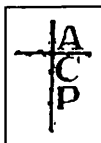


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# The Associational Principle

## *Still alive among Seventh Day Baptists*

by Kenneth Chroniger

We as Baptists have a tradition. “Tradition” is not necessarily a bad word; it is simply the way we do things. As Baptists, we focus our tradition on Scripture viewed through the lenses of historical circumstances that make us a people.

What are the marks of our Baptist tradition?

According to *A Baptist Manual of Polity and Practice*, “...the distinguishing marks of the Baptists, historically speaking, were a regenerate membership, safeguarded by believer’s baptism, congregational polity, coupled with an associational principle; and the necessity of freeing the church from interference by the civil government.”<sup>1</sup>

### The Associational Principle

I would like for us to consider the historical mark of the associational principle.

What is this principle about? It is where your local assembly (i.e., church) enters into voluntary cooperation with other institutions, particularly other local assemblies, “in work that belongs to them all—missions, Bible study, evangelism, publication of literature, and education.”<sup>2</sup>

### Is it Biblical?

As with other practices or doctrines, the looming question (especially for Seventh Day Baptists) is, “Do we find the associational principle in the Bible, principally the New Testament?”

Unfortunately, we do not find the actual words—“associational principle”—anywhere in the Scriptures. None of the New Testament writers state, “Now, I am going to



***The associational principle is local churches voluntarily cooperating “in work that belongs to them all—missions, Bible study, evangelism, publication of literature, and education.”***

illustrate the associational principle.”

Like an archeologist, we need to dig in the “soil of Scripture” to find the shattered pottery that, when put together, gives us the principle.

### Texts of implication

There seems to be at least three Biblical texts which imply the associational principle in an embryonic

form: Acts 15:1-30, 1 Corinthians 16:1, and Revelation 1:11-20.

In Acts 15, the associational principle helps clarify the issue of “table fellowship.” In 1 Corinthians 16, the task of the associational principle is to aid a sister church in distress. And in Revelation 1, we have a picture of an association of independent (autonomous) congregations, linked

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together, with the Lord Jesus Christ in their midst.

### Why a Baptist tradition?

Why did the associational principle become one of the marks of our Baptist tradition? One theory is that Baptists, as part of the dissenter movement, were not the “established church” in England. Since they opposed the established church, Baptists needed to develop a *common confession* which would say, “We are not they.”

### A common confession

Local independent Baptist congregations would find it hard to stand against the power of the state church without support from others. The *common confession* became a tool of knowing “who was in and who was out; who would stand with you and who would not.”

Historian William Brackney reflects that “gradually the Particular Baptists began to form loosely organized regional and urban associations so as to put forth a common confession; soon the General Baptists followed suit. Eventually all but Seventh Day Baptists followed this trend.”<sup>3</sup>

### SDBs at a different level

While for other Baptists this theory holds water, it would seem that for Seventh Day Baptists the outworking of the associational principle was not on the same level of the *common confession* of other Baptist dissenters. It would take the establishment of a Seventh Day Baptist congregation in the British colonies in America and the subsequent westward movement to confirm the associational principle among SDBs.

(According to an early *SDB Manual of Procedure*, “At an early date, 1684, they established the ‘yearly’ meetings for worship and consultation.”<sup>4</sup> Does this validate

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## ***Our associational principle is unique among Baptists because it is tied together to our commitment to the Sabbath and to familial relationships.***

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the associational principle for Seventh Day Baptists?)

### Two “ropes”: The Sabbath...

Another theory is that we had two distinctive “ropes” tying us together during this time.

The first “rope” was similar to other Baptists’ *common confession*, but ours was unique because we “confessed” the seventh-day Sabbath. Why did this occur at this point and not in England?

We gave witness to the Sabbath at John Clarke’s church—a Baptist congregation in Newport, R.I., not the Church of England. We were forced to say, “Here we stand; we cannot do otherwise.” This belief in the seventh-day Sabbath separated us from other Baptists, even in the taking of the Lord’s Supper.

### ...and family

The second “rope” was our familial relationships.

We came together because we needed to help each other and do things that a single congregation could not do by itself. We were—and are—“family.”

### Unique, and current

Our understanding of the associational principle is unique among Baptists because it is tied together to our commitment to the Sabbath and to familial relationships. And where does this associational principle appear today among Seventh Day Bap-

tists for the local assembly? It exists primarily in the Associations and the General Conference.

From a more recent *Manual*, “Among Seventh Day Baptists, the Association is a voluntary regional grouping of Seventh Day Baptist churches. Beyond the internal functions of mutual encouragement and aid, the Associations endeavor to work in areas of evangelism and service where cooperative effort is most useful.”<sup>5</sup>

“The associational principle,” according to SDB Historian Don Sanford, “as applied to churches, refers to the organization of churches having common interest for mutual benefit.”<sup>6</sup>

Here is the outworking of the associational principle. It announces that this mark of the Baptist tradition is alive among Seventh Day Baptists. **SR**

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*Rev. Kenneth Chroniger is pastor of the Alfred Station, N.Y., SDB Church.*

<sup>1</sup>Norman H. Maring, Winthrop S. Hudson; *A Baptist Manual of Polity and Practice* (The Judson Press, 1963), p. 15.

<sup>2</sup>William Lewis Burdick, Corliss Fitz Randolph, compilers; *A Manual for Seventh Day Baptist Church Procedure* (American Sabbath Tract Society, 1923), p. 19.

<sup>3</sup>William Brackney, editor, *Baptist Life and Thought* (Judson Press, 1998), p. 47.

<sup>4</sup>Burdick, Fitz Randolph, loc. cit.

<sup>5</sup>Wayne R. Rood, editor, *A Manual of Procedures for Seventh Day Baptist Churches*, (SDB General Conference, 1972), p. 21.

<sup>6</sup>Don A. Sanford, *A Choosing People: The History of Seventh Day Baptists* (Broadman Press, 1992), p. 170.

# Associations: A link to cooperation and kinship

by Don A. Sanford

## From “Rhody” to the west

When the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference was organized in 1802, most of our churches were located in that narrow strip of land near the Atlantic Coast from Rhode Island to southern New Jersey. Brookfield, in central New York State, and the New Salem and Lost Creek churches in western Virginia, were the only churches in the Appalachian region.

The Revolutionary War pushed the boundary west to the Mississippi River and added such inviting areas as the Old Northwest Territory to the new nation. The Louisiana Purchase in 1803 more than doubled the area of the United States and made the entire Mississippi River system available for inland transportation. The Erie Canal across New York further opened the Great Lakes for access to the Northwest and provided a means of shipping produce back to markets in the East.

## With migration came growth

Seventh Day Baptists were among those who followed this westward

**The desire for wider participation at less cost gave rise to localized Associations.**

migration. From the eight constituting churches of General Conference in 1802, the denomination expanded to four times that number within the next 30 years.

Thirty-two churches reported to General Conference in 1832. Most of the new churches were concentrated in central and western New York State, western Virginia, and across the Ohio River into southern Ohio.

Some of these settlers enjoyed the “homecoming” atmosphere of General Conference’s annual sessions which rotated among Hopkinton, Rhode Island; Petersburg (later named Berlin), New York; and Piscataway in New Jersey. However, the vast majority were unable to spend the time and expense to undertake such long and tiresome trips. The desire for wider participation at less cost gave rise to the formation of localized Associations.

## Associations organized

In 1834, it was proposed that the churches be formed into different Associations which would appoint delegates to sit in General Conference, and that “such delegates form the active body of such General Conference when in session.”<sup>1</sup> Three Associations were thus organized:

*Eastern Association*—churches in Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Jersey. (Later, it was modified to include churches adjacent to this region in New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland.)

*Middle Association*—those churches in New York State, west of the Hudson River and east of

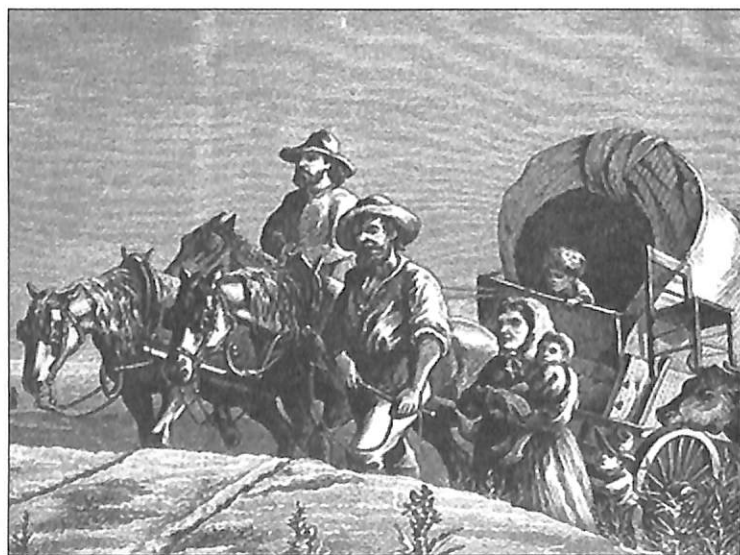
**Different Associations would appoint delegates to sit in General Conference.**

Allegany County. (In 1836, it reported as the Central Association.)

*Western Association*—churches in Allegany County, and areas both west and south of that county.

## A wider participation, or a threat to autonomy?

The original intent was for each Association to appoint delegates who would form the active body of General Conference when in session. Reporting in 1835, the Conference committee which organized the Associations envisioned an arrangement based upon the principle of federal



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ism, defined as “a form of government in which power is distributed between a central authority and a number of constituent territorial units.”<sup>2</sup>

It was proposed that each of the Associations would hold its annual meeting a few weeks prior to sessions of General Conference, consider items which might be of concern, and select 12 delegates to carry these concerns to the Conference sessions.

In theory, this would bring broader participation and a sense of importance to the scattered churches on the frontier. In practice, it was viewed by some as a violation of the

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In practice, it was  
viewed by some as  
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local autonomy.**

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Baptist principles of local autonomy and the priesthood of all believers. Thus several of the more established churches—whose members were accustomed to the homecoming covenant renewal—refused to join an Association and continued to participate as a church.

### **A compromise**

Just as the Constitutional Convention of the national government was forced to compromise between the larger states and the smaller states, so the General Conference in 1837 compromised.

Churches that joined an Association were to be represented by the delegates from that Association, while those churches that were not members of an Association were allowed to have individual representation.<sup>3</sup> Thus, for over 30 years, the Conference constitution defined

membership as consisting of “churches and associations.”

In 1875, when a constitutional revision was adopted, Associational representation was not mentioned. However, it can be noted that from that time until 1928, care was taken to include vice presidents from each of the Associations, although no power or duties were assigned to them. When new Associations were added, more vice presidents were also included.

### **Strength in separation?**

One can only speculate on the long-term effect of this organic separation of the Associations from the General Conference.

Would the Associations under a federal form of organization now be a stronger unit of the denomination? Would more people be involved in the decision-making process? Would General Conference lose some of its

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**Would  
General  
Conference  
lose some of  
its covenant  
or kinship  
strengthening?**

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covenant or kinship strengthening in which individuals can feel a direct participation? Would the role of the various societal agencies be altered by subsidiary societies on an Associational level?

History cannot answer these imponderable questions, but it can report on some of the functions that Associations have fulfilled in their relationships with the churches and the denomination.

### **Cooperating with General Conference**

Although there has been little “organic” relationship between the

Associations and the General Conference, there has been considerable interaction between them. The 1997 *Manual of Procedures for Seventh Day Baptist Churches* states:

“The creation of these associations was a reflection of the pre-existing, informal connections between churches, and was an indication of the common need for mutual encouragement felt by all. In accordance with Seventh Day Baptist belief in local church autonomy, the association has no governing power over the member churches. Its power, like that of the General Conference, is entirely advisory. However, the prayerfully sought decisions of the delegates deserve, and are given, careful consideration by the member churches. Though advisory in nature, they carry considerable weight.”<sup>4</sup>

In spite of the fact that the Associations have had no governing power over either the Conference or their constituent churches, and have been largely limited to advisory power, they have been important to the work of both the denomination and local churches (see pages 8-9), promoting a sense of kinship among individual members. **SR**

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*Rev. Don Sanford serves as our denominational historian. This information came from a booklet he prepared for the 50th anniversary of the North Central Association in 1997.*

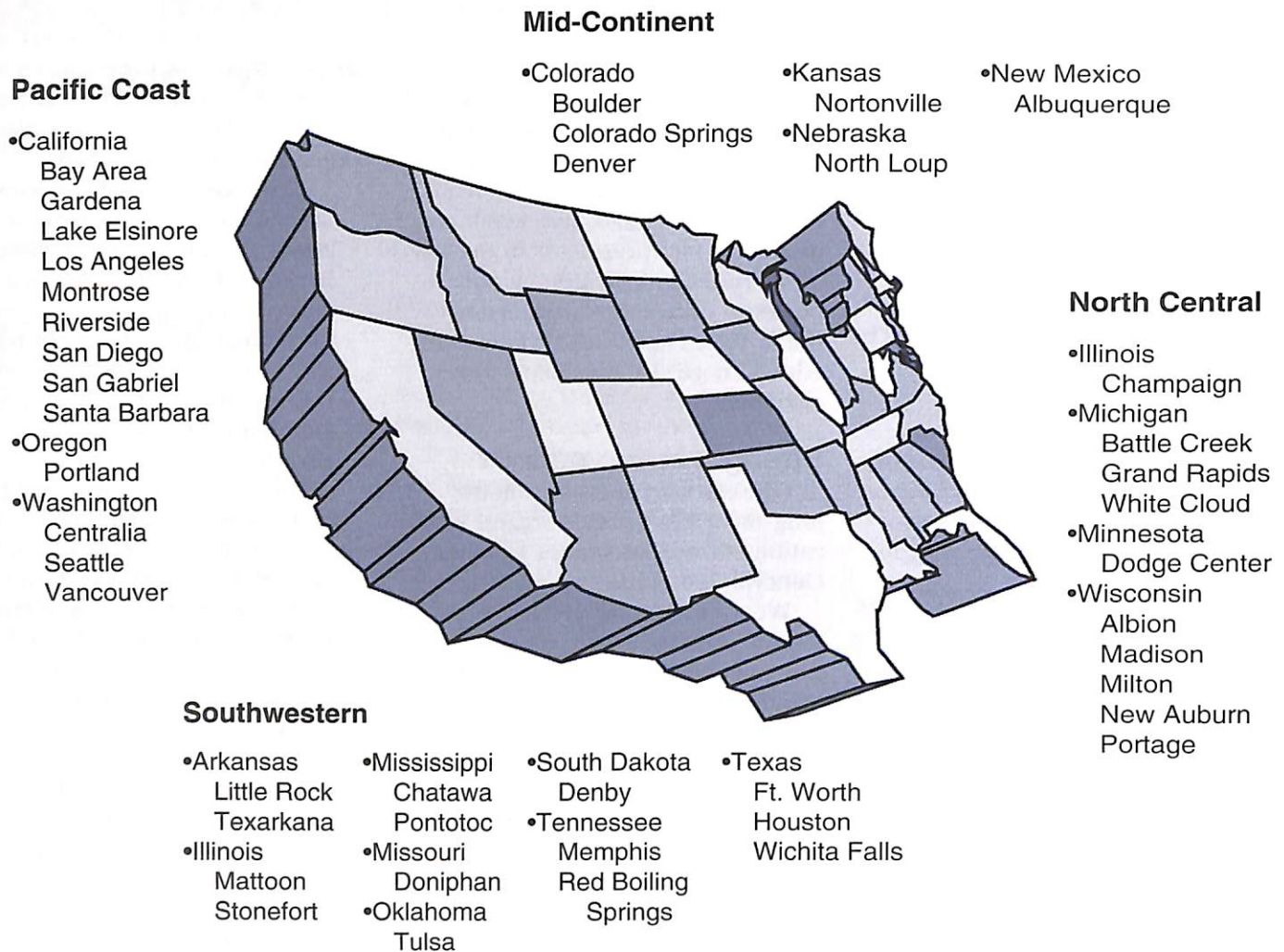
<sup>1</sup>Conference minutes, *Seventh Day Baptist Yearbook*, 1934, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>“Federalism,” *Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary*, 1966 ed.

<sup>3</sup>Conference minutes, *Seventh Day Baptist Yearbook*, 1837, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>*A Manual of Procedures for Seventh Day Baptist Churches*, 1997. Committee on Faith and Order, D-4.

# Associations with their churches and branches



## The Associations' Role in

1) For many years, the reporting of statistics and activities was done through the Associations.

2) At times, the Associations had societies which were considered "arms" of the Missionary, Tract, Sabbath School, and Education Societies.

3) The denominational Women's Society and Memorial Board resulted from Associations' recommendations.

4) The Associations each select two delegates to serve on the Conference Nominating Committee, providing direct input in selecting denominational leadership. At times, other standing committees were composed of Associational representatives.

5) Attempts have been made to elect members of Commission or the General Council to reflect geographical or Associational participation.

6) The Associations have been involved in hosting annual sessions of General Conference.

7) Associational meetings allow the Conference President, and other Conference leaders and their agencies, to meet with several churches at one time.

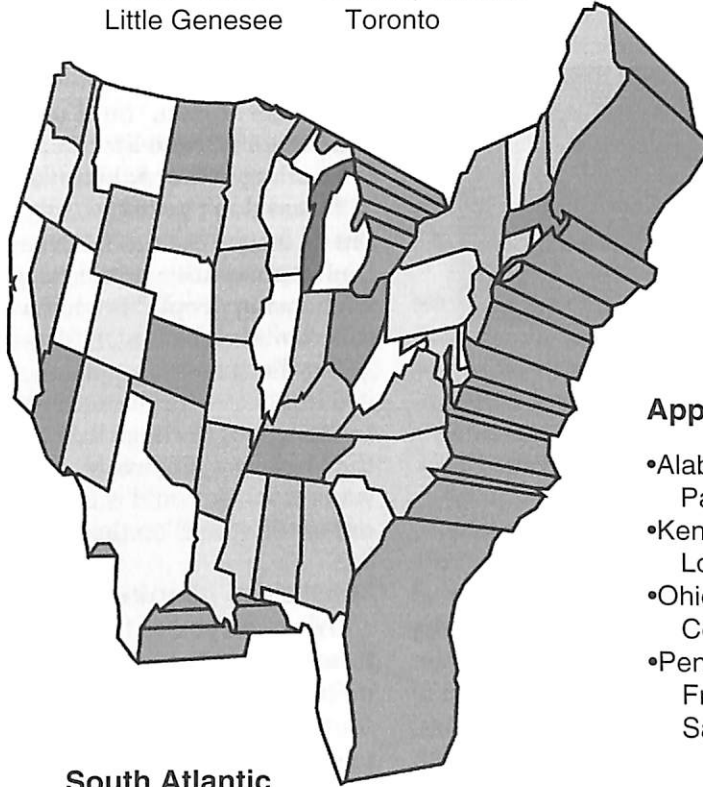
8) The theme for an Association's meeting is often related to the President's General Conference theme for that year.

9) There is a close relationship between an Asso-



## Allegheny

- New York  
Alfred  
Alfred Station  
Little Genesee
- Pennsylvania  
Coudersport
- Ontario, Canada  
Toronto



## Central New York

- Adams Center  
Verona
- Leonardsville-  
Brookfield

## Eastern

- Connecticut  
Middletown  
Waterford
- Maryland  
Mitchellville
- Massachusetts  
Springfield
- Pennsylvania  
Philadelphia
- New Jersey  
Bridgeton  
Bridgewater  
Plainfield  
Shiloh
- New York  
Berlin  
Brooklyn
- Rhode Island  
Ashaway  
Rockville  
Westerly  
(Pawcatuck)  
Westerly (Vision  
Christian)
- Washington, D.C.

## Appalachian

- Alabama  
Paint Rock
- Kentucky  
Louisville
- Ohio  
Columbus
- Pennsylvania  
Freeport  
Salemville  
(Bell)
- Salemville  
(German)
- Tennessee  
Nashville
- West Virginia  
Lost Creek  
New Milton  
Salem

## South Atlantic

- Florida  
Bradenton  
Daytona Beach  
Miami  
Okeechobee
- Palatka  
West Palm  
Beach
- Georgia  
Atlanta
- South Carolina  
Myrtle Beach  
Charleston  
St. Stephens

# the Denominational Mission

ciation and an agency or committee of General Conference—such as the Board of Christian Education, the Missionary Board, the Tract and Communication Council, and the core group of the Standing Committee on Christian Social Action (CSA).

10) In their decade rotations, the Board of Directors of the Women's Society have looked at the Associations, or groups within them, for assuming leadership responsibilities.

11) Some of the denomination's program emphases are implemented on an Associational level.

12) Although the ordination process for ministers begins with the local church, the Association is soon

involved. The *Manual of Procedures* (F-9) recognizes that ordination is "of such great importance to other congregations of the General Conference, as well as to the church considering ordination, that there is need to seek the help of fellow Seventh Day Baptists in shouldering this responsibility. ... It is therefore expected that the church will request delegates from sister churches within the Association and from the General Conference, who will be empowered to participate fully in the examination and ordination."

—Don A. Sanford

# Is God passing us by?

by L.B. Lee

*At the Mid-Continent Association meeting in October, attendees focused on discovering a target audience for ministry and how to reach out to new groups. Below are some excerpts from one pastor's challenging (indicting?) exhortation.*



L.B. Lee

When we think of The Great Commission that Jesus gave early Christians, do we consider it our commission also? Or do we preach a different Gospel?

Do we seek to give the Good News to lost souls, to bring them into the light, love, and joy of a life with Jesus?

I believe that we *intend* to do this and that we *want* to do this. We plant God's Word, and hope that we can bring new believers to Him.

But in actuality, we don't do that very often. Many of our churches just aren't growing.

In Colorado Springs, there are individual churches within five or six miles of ours that are larger than our entire U.S. and Canada Conference. That makes me wonder if we're on the right track.

Where do most of our new people come from? After being an SDB for 27 years now—seven of those as a pastor—I have some ideas about how we grow.

## How have we "grown"?

Basically, our denomination has grown in three ways:

1) By following the directive given to Adam and Eve in Genesis 1:28—"God blessed them [man and woman] and said to them: 'Be fruitful and multiply.'"

For over 300 years—until about the late 1960s—SDBs were fruitful and multiplied. Now, with today's trend of having 2.5 children per family, we can no longer increase

simply by expanding our families.

2) By shuffling members. SDBs move around, sometimes searching for better churches or relocating because of new jobs.

We often see the same people shuffling from church to church; so much so that if we don't recognize someone, we approach them and play the "SDB Family Name Game" to see what bloodline they're from. (I don't belong to any of the SDB family lines, but even I use this exercise to try to figure out what family a church visitor belongs to!)

3) Through receiving people from other Sabbathkeeping churches who feel better served in our churches.

Some of these "converts" are new to the Sabbath and are simply trying out different churches, while others are unhappy with their current denomination. (Or their denomination is unhappy with them.) Unfortunately, many who come to us are broken souls, cut-off members in search of a new home.

Occasionally, we even attract "accidental tourists." Sometimes visitors attend our church, thinking that we're the Seventh-day *Adventist* church which is actually a mile down the street.

## Is this what Jesus wants?

So, are we fulfilling the Great Commission? Is this what Jesus would want, shifting our own members and collecting "sheep" from other folds?

Jesus said that he would make us "fishers of men," but I'm tired of fishing in stocked ponds; tired of "stealing" other Sabbathkeepers.

Please don't get me wrong. I'm all for the Sabbath. Seventh Day Baptists are a proud people—a "choosing people" is what we're called in a book on SDB history.

Our heritage is important, and it shouldn't be forgotten. But, unfortunately, our heritage isn't saving the lost in a dying world. If God wanted to, He could raise SDBs out of the stones on the ground.

## "Outside" thinking

What can you or I do to bring those dead in sin to the grace and mercy of Jesus? How can we think "outside the box"? What can we do to share Jesus without denying who we are or what we believe?

I don't intend to list all the "whats" and "hows" of what must be done. Instead, I want us to think outside the walls of our churches and the days we gather. Each church, as well as each believer, needs to decide how to reach someone who would never set foot in a church or come to the Sabbath. All of us need to leave Jerusalem and go out into the world.

## Why do we stay?

If our heart's desire is to lead lost souls to Jesus, then why do we stay Seventh Day Baptists, only reaching our children and the few individuals who accidentally (or intentionally) show up at our churches Saturday morning? If ministers entrusted with the Gospel have a burning desire to see lost souls come to Christ, then why stay as a Seventh Day Baptist?

I stay because I believe we're right, biblically speaking. Isn't that why you stay, too? We belong to a priesthood of believers who adhere to the doc-

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trine of “Solo Scriptura”—Bible only. We worship on the biblical Sabbath instead of a day of tradition. Is this what keeps us in the Church: the Sabbath alone?

### **A new look at an old parable**

In Luke 18:9-14, two men are praying. With whom do you identify in this parable? In all honesty, I find myself identifying with the tax collector. Is that your choice as well?

By identifying with the collector, we show ourselves to be the Pharisee. That was exactly what the Pharisee was doing. He was identifying with all those things that he knew in his mind to be good, with those who were doing the right things. He said, negatively, “I am not like others.” On the positive side, he said he did “this and that” for God because it is right.

It’s only as we come to this parable and say, “Yeah, that Pharisee; that’s me” that we pray the prayer of the tax collector—“God, be merciful to me, a sinner!”

This is a tricky way to look at this passage, but it helps to point out an important concept: What often “streams in the blood” of so many denominations, including ours, is the same “element” that streamed in the blood of the Pharisees—Legalism! Pharisaism!

### **Am I a Pharisee?**

We don’t have to work to become Pharisees. In fact, we are often born Pharisees, simply because we grow up—or later become a part of—a church that believes that everything it does is right. This applies to every denomination, not just Seventh Day Baptists.

In this passage, the Pharisee called upon God. It’s often overlooked that he said, “God, I thank Thee.” This doesn’t sound like legalism, does it? It wasn’t as though he was going to stand there before God and before this “wretch” beside him and say, “God, I thank You that I have

achieved this by deeds of self-effort.” No Pharisee has ever been as crude as that. And no SDB who is a born-again believer would say such a thing, either.

Notice that the first thing the Pharisee did was to ascribe everything he was, and everything he had, to the grace of God. “God, I thank Thee; God, I thank You.”

Still, he mistakenly pointed to what was *not* taking place in his life—the absence of evil (as if he were perfect), and what he thought *was* taking place—the presence of good.

### **The “wretched” tax man**

Meanwhile, the tax collector “stood afar off.” The only thing he did was to beat his chest and say, “God, be merciful to me, a sinner.” That’s all he said. And Jesus proclaimed, “I tell you this man went home justified before God... and not the other.”

Notice what this “wretched man” did. He didn’t quote the Psalms or recite the five points of Calvinism. He didn’t state that he was going to obey the Ten Commandments. And he didn’t sign up for the membership class or go through the waters of baptism. He simply said, “God, be merciful to me, a sinner.”

### **Strong beliefs, or simple prayer?**

We can believe, and even be right about, many things because we hold biblical truths higher than others. This is why I became a Seventh Day Baptist. But is this “prideful attitude” keeping us from reaching the lost? Is it giving us a false sense of security?

As we see in our text, justification before God does not come by doing all the right things; it comes by praying a simple prayer: “God, be merciful to me, a sinner.”

The other man—the Pharisee—acknowledged that God made him all he was and gave him all he had, while pointing to the works in his own life, which he acknowledged

were the fruit of grace. And yet Jesus said that this man did not go home justified before God.

The tax collector represents the historic Protestant, who calls upon God alone. “God, be merciful to me, a sinner.” He relied on the “doing” and the dying of Christ, and the grace of God alone. He went home justified, his prayer accepted.

The Pharisee, on the other hand, in spite of all of his *perceived* righteousness and obedience, was not justified. He prayed to himself.

### **Tradition over the Gospel?**

Over the past 350-plus years, has this attitude caused us to stagnate? In believing that we are right and all others are wrong, has this caused us to be unsuccessful in reaching the lost and bringing them to Christ?

Is it possible that something as basic as the Gospel of Jesus has been pushed aside by other things in some of our churches—abstainings, pride, intolerance of other points of view?

Sometimes I wonder if God feels like saying, “I will pass them over as I seek those who would lead lost souls to my Son and salvation. How can they teach about repentance, and mercy, and grace, when *they themselves* will not cry out for mercy, or repent, or accept My grace?”

“Instead, they pray to themselves about how right they are, how proud they are to keep the right day of worship, and yet they won’t go outside the boundaries of their own walls.

“I will pass them by as they stand in their pride, and I will use others; those who are broken and on their knees, for only someone who knows mercy can share mercy.”

### **Show mercy, teach grace, preach Christ**

You and I may say, “No, it can’t be true.” But I believe it is true. We had better reevaluate how we share the Gospel, or even what it is. Shame on

*cont. on page 22*

# New Executive Director Appointed

For the last few years, Executive Secretary Dr. Pete May has provided leadership to the General Conference on a part-time basis, while continuing his medical practice.

Dr. Pete and his wife Nancy indicated that their health would not permit their continuation beyond their current term, which is scheduled for completion August 2005. We thank them for their dedicated service to God and the Conference.

## Leadership search

Since Conference in August 2002, the General Council has been considering leadership needs, developing a job description, and searching for candidates. After careful and prayerful consideration, the General Council has appointed Rob Appel, of Milton, Wis., to be the new Executive Director. According to Conference bylaws, this appointment is to be confirmed at Conference 2004 in Buckhannon, W.Va.

Rob brings a unique combination of product development and marketing in the business world, church leadership, Conference responsibilities, and enthusiasm for serving God and Seventh Day Baptists.

## Employment experience

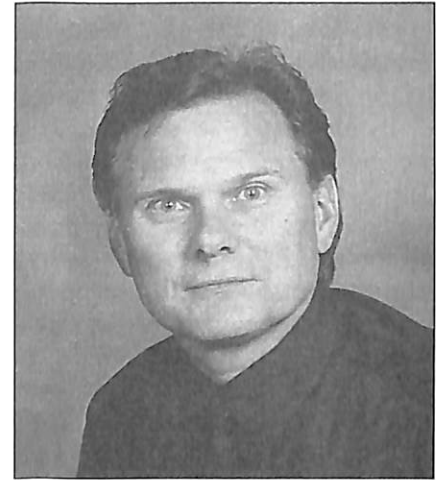
Rob has over 18 years of management experience, emphasizing a collaborative yet decisive style in sales and marketing management in equipment for the golf industry. He has directed product development, and recruited and managed sales forces, with a record of success.

For the last four years, Rob has been Owner/President of Velocity Concepts, serving as a consultant to the golf products industry, working in product and packaging development, and as an overseas purchasing agent.

## Family and church background

Rob is a lifetime Seventh Day Baptist, the son of faithful SDB servants, the late Rev. A. Addison and Jeanette Appel. His wife, Cheri, has been a member of the Tract and Communication Council. They have two children—Aubrey, SCSCer and college student, and Daniel in high school.

***Rob brings  
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ing in the  
business  
world, church  
leadership,  
Conference***



*Rob Appel*

***responsibilities, and enthusiasm  
for serving God and  
Seventh Day Baptists.***

Rob has been a member of our churches in Albion, Wis.; Nortonville, Kan.; and Dodge Center, Minn. As a member of the Milton SDB church, he has served as trustee from 1986-89 and 1994-2002, and as church president, 1997-2001. He currently is chair of the Deacons and chair of the Membership Team.

## Conference service

Rob has served as Parliamentarian for General Conference in 2000 and 2001. He also served on the staff of the last two Young Adult Pre-Cons.

In 2003, Conference elected him to serve a three-year term on General Council.

Please pray with us for God's leading of Rob, the Coordinating Leadership Team, the Conference, and all the SDB churches.

*—From the Leadership Transition Committee of the  
General Council*



Women's Society page by Laura Price  
www.sdbwboard.org

## Reach out!

*"As cold waters to a thirsty [weary] soul, so is good news from a far country" (Proverbs 25:25).*

How many of you enjoy receiving "real mail"? You know, a typed or handwritten letter from a distant friend or family member. Or a card with a nice sentiment—"Thinking of you..." Or an inquiry—"How are you doing today?" Or simply a postcard with a few thoughts scribbled on it. It can be a real lift.

It is important to keep in touch with family and friends, near or distant, and to reach out to the ones we've yet to meet in person. Some of our SDB church families overseas are making this effort, reaching out to our ladies here in the U.S. for international fellowship. I encourage you to extend your own hand in return.

Marjorie Jacob, president of the SDB Women's Board, received the following correspondence from Missionary Society Executive Director Kirk Looper:

Greetings. It was good to talk to you on the phone Monday.

I am sending you the names and addresses of the coordinators of the international Conferences. Those wanting to hear from women in the USA live in Malawi, Rwanda, Burundi, Gambia, Brazil, and Australia.

You would probably be better off addressing any correspondence to the president of their Women's Board, in care of the coordinator in each country. They will then forward the correspondence to the appropriate woman. Some have e-mail, others will need to be contacted by "regular" mail. I hope it works out for your ladies.

My trip to Rwanda was very beneficial in many areas. In my trip report, I'm including a section that addresses the needs of the women there—for sewing machines, materials, and supplies.

The women explained that, with the proper supplies, they could make handicraft projects to sell in the marketplace. The 1994 war left the country with many widows and orphans. The widows have difficulty finding jobs because the men are getting them. But if they are able to make and sell sewing projects and craft items, they could make their own living.

I hope that the Women's Board will take an interest in these needy women. A sewing machine costs less than \$100 in Rwanda. I will give a detailed explanation of their efforts and needs in my trip report.

Burundi is in a similar position. That country is just coming out of a war, and they have many aimless widows and orphans. The streets are crowded with homeless children, and many widows die of hunger and neglect. Like in Rwanda, they have so many needs!

I appreciate all the work the Women's Board is doing to support the women in our sister Conferences and churches. Whenever possible, we designate gifts to help with women's projects. I want to encourage the women's organizations in the countries whenever possible.

Again, thank you very much for your help and support.

In His service,  
Kirk Looper

Ladies in the U.S. and Canada wanting to undertake correspondence fellowships with women in

other countries may write the leader of that SDB Conference:

**Malawi:** C.Y. Munthali, Central Africa Conference, PO Box 337, Blantyre, Malawi (Phone/FAX: 265-1-639441)

**Rwanda:** Pastor Elie Nduwayesu, Seventh Day Baptist Churches in Rwanda, P.B. 5, Ruhengeri, Rwanda (Phone: 250-546-249; FAX: 250-546-296; E-mail: enduwayesu@hotmail.com)

**Burundi:** Nduwayo Gilbert, Association des Missionnaires Baptists du Septieme Jour, BP 3593, Bujumbura, Burundi (FAX: 0257-222147)

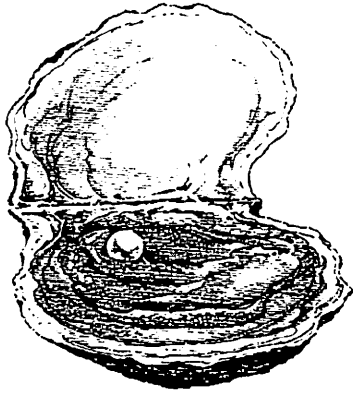
**The Gambia:** Mr. Kwabena Opoku, Seventh Day Baptist Conference, P.M.B. 1481 GPO, Banjul, The Gambia (Phone: 220-223763; FAX: 220-227214; E-mail: sdbapgam@ganet.gm)

**Brazil:** Pr. Leonildo Lebkuhen, Rua Dom Pero, Il No 522, CEP 89.400-000, Porto Uniao/SC, Brazil

**Australia:** Pastor Andrew Goulding, PO Box 1089, Beenleigh QLD, Australia (Phone: 732003233; E-mail: gouldingmob@bigpond.com.au)

Thanks to all of our ladies for your hard work and generosity. I'll be looking forward to hearing more from you here in the U.S. as well as abroad. (E-mail: Theeliza94@mac.com or write to: 539 SR 100, Palatka FL 32177, USA)

Prayerfully,  
Laura Price



Pearls from the Past by Don A. Sanford, historian

## Robe research reaps remembrances

Last October, Women's Society President Marjorie Jacob requested a list of all the Robe of Achievement recipients since its inception in 1964.

Including four women from the German Seventh Day Baptist Church in Irvington, N.J., 50 women have been selected for the award. Two honorees received the Robe posthumously—Lois Wells of Los Angeles, Calif., in 1985, and Sylvia Lindo of Toronto, Ontario, in 2002.

I did not know Sylvia Lindo, but the thought that Lois Wells wore a heavenly robe before she was honored with an earthly robe brought to mind two points:

First, no one achieves a heavenly adornment through good works. We do not earn it by what we do; it is granted because of what God, in Christ, has done for us.

Secondly, I think of the many women in our denomination who deserved but never received robes of achievement. From Tacy Hubbard and her three daughters to the succeeding generations, SDB women have been the backbone of many of our churches. Lois Wells had no biological children, but she was a "spiritual mother" to hundreds!

While Lois never had the opportunity to wear her Robe of Achievement, nearly four decades earlier she was honored at General Conference with the "Passing of the Baton."

Dr. Benjamin F. Johanson led a Conference chorus of about 50 male voices in 1947, and he kept a copy of that August 23 presentation. At the

conclusion of the concert, Dr. Johanson called Lois to the platform and said:

"I have been authorized by the president of Conference to express to Miss Lois Wells the appreciation of the president and delegates, for her splendid work among the young people of Conference in pageantry and song. I am particularly glad to do this because I believe that in my 50 years of association with music,

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***Lois Wells  
had no biological  
children, but she was  
a "spiritual mother"  
to hundreds!***

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I have developed the faculty of recognizing musical leadership and genius when I see it.

"I had been told of Miss Wells' work as a choral director among young people. Now, I have seen and heard, as you also have. To me, her work among us is a perfect example of the value of consecrated, Christian leadership and the importance of selecting and training other leadership for our coming generation.

"A baton is a symbol of musical leadership. I used one today so that you in the audience could know who among these 50 men is attempting to tell the other 49 what to do and how to do it. But it is only a symbol and not a necessary implement of music. Miss Wells has not used a baton in her

directing here, and I am sure I could direct without it if I should wish.

"Miss Wells, I would like to present you with my baton. It is a symbol of our recognition of your able leadership in song and pageantry among our young people of this Conference. It is also a token of my esteem, plus that of the Conference president and the delegates assembled here at Westerly, and a recognition of your splendid services to their sessions.

"We, as delegates, and especially our young people, have been inspired and uplifted by your work.

"You may not wish to use this baton in your capacity as a director; you seem to get along very well without a stick! But, will you keep it? And when you look at it, will you remember the youngsters you directed here at Westerly and the many friends you have made here?

"We hope that you have many more years of consecrated leadership among our young people."

I was one of those 49 men in that chorus, and I remember singing in many other Conference choirs that Lois Wells directed.

Thirty years later, I was privileged to serve with Lois as elected members of the Commission of General Conference. During our term (1977-1980), that body became the General Council. Throughout the organizational changes, Lois did not use her baton even once to keep us "on beat." But her quality leadership did help bring direction and harmony to our collective discussions and projections. **SR**



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# SR Almanac

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

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## One year ago—March 2003

“Hard times, good times” reflects on the long and interesting life of 104-year-old Stanley Davis. [This current SR carries the obituary of Mr. Davis, who died in November 2003.]

Dr. Dale Thorngate shares insights from his Scholar-in-Residence experience at Baylor (Texas) University.

Large map features photos of delegates to the recently-held SDB World Federation sessions in Brazil.

Christian Education page invites readers to nominate a Sabbath School Teacher of the Year.

The Conference Host Committee (in the form of Justin Camenga) entices and informs us about George Fox University in Newberg, Ore.

## Five years ago—March 1999

Articles on “Christian Environmentalism” help answer the dilemma of “How to love the earth without being labeled ‘New Age.’”

Don Sanford shares about the “Miracle of the Maple.”

Resources from the Associated Baptist Press list suggestions for living a more “creation-friendly” life.

Details listed about the SDB Invitation to Conversation program.

Conference President Norma Rudert asks, “Why are you a Seventh Day Baptist?”

Updates and photos come from the SDB Conference in Indonesia.

## 10 years ago—March 1994

Theme of “Spiritual Disciplines” looks at prayer, fasting, and journaling.

Former editor Leon Maltby reflects on his 20 years of service (1953-1973) to the SR and Tract Society. 1994 is the 150th anniversary year of the Recorder.

Alfred, N.Y., church pays tribute to some former pastors.

Missionary Society updates comes from The Gambia, Camerons, Philippines, and Australia.

“Beacon” page tells of different kind of YF activity night in Alfred Station, N.Y.

Plans shared about taking the Natural Evangelism Training Retreat to Jamaica.

## 25 years ago—March 1979

COM Dean Herbert Saunders visits 15 churches and six seminaries on a western U.S. tour. Nine seminary students and 13 pastors were contacted. Ministers’ Conference to be held in Milton, Wis., in April.

Local church news comes from Houston, Texas; Plainfield, N.J.; Ashaway, R.I.; Central, Md.; Riverside, Calif.; and New York City.

Pacific Coast Association meeting held in Los Angeles.

After 12 years of faithful service, Jean Davis McAllister resigns as secretary at the SDB Headquarters in Plainfield. Executive Secretary K.D. Hurley says, “We will all miss her as a member of the team.”

Editor John Bevis continues a study on SDB church covenants.

## 50 years ago—March 1954

Rev. Socrates A. Thompson ordained at the Luna SDB Church in Jamaica.

Many churches designate March 27 as “Stewardship Sabbath.”

Milton College names Percy L. Dunn as its seventh president.

Fourteen men gather in Westerly, R.I., to discuss the formation of a New England Laymen’s Fellowship.

Rev. E.A. Coltrin installed as pastor in Boulder, Colo.

Longtime Board member of Salem (W.Va.) College, George H. Trainer, passes away. Trainer was known as Salem’s “Grand Old Man.”

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### ...where are we headed?

#### Pray—

- for our lasting witness to others
- that we are better stewards of the earth
- for those planning Conference activities
- for growth in personal spiritual disciplines
- for our new denominational leaders
- for all to keep the Sabbath for God’s glory
- with thanksgiving for each new day



## Christian Education in Association

Christian education is the God-ordained act of His people, provoking others who belong to Him, to seek, find, love, and obey God. The goal of Christian education is maturity, as God defines maturity.

Evidence of this maturity can be seen when God's people choose to use His Scripture for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness; when His people demonstrate a willingness to walk in the love and good deeds He prepared; and when His people react to life with the Fruit of the Spirit.

In this, as in all aspects of the Christian life, God must receive the credit: You plant, another waters, but God causes the growth.

The local church is where most intentional Christian education takes place. The covenant community is the place where we can most easily see that our decisions and actions influence and change the decisions and actions of our brothers and sisters in Christ. These relationships provide the best opportunity for knowing each other and, therefore, the best chance of knowing how to spur each other on to love and good deeds.

Intentional Christian education in the local church is important, and we must not neglect it.

Yet, our call from God to influence and provoke others in Christ goes beyond the local church. We see this when Paul asked others to encourage (provoke?) the church in Corinth to participate in an offering to assist the poor in the Jerusalem church. We see this when the church in Jerusalem wrote a letter to Antioch to mitigate

the false teaching of troublemakers from Jerusalem. In so doing, they encouraged the Antioch church.

Today, we see intentional Christian education occurring in our Associations of churches. This is good, and this is the way it should be.

Here is a brief list of some of the things Associations are doing in the realm of Christian education.

### Sharing what God hath wrought

Once upon a time, many Associations expected their churches to write a letter describing what had occurred during the previous year. This provided a way for groups that were somewhat disconnected during the year to keep track of the comings and goings of others.

That was an important function. However, the letters went beyond sharing "family news." They were an opportunity to share what God had done in the group during the year.

As we share how God is active in the world today, we remind ourselves that God is present. In that process, we remember His call to seek His kingdom with all that we are.

If your Association still exchanges letters, listen for things that demonstrate the power of God. If you are responsible for writing one of these letters, ask, "What has God done for us this year and how can I share that in a way that will be heard?"

### Bible quizzes

At least two Associations have had Bible quizzes as part of their annual activities. Generally speaking, these quizzes have had church-based teams

competing to answer the largest number of factual questions about a book in Bible.

This competitive style can perhaps lead people to focus on winning and to forget to focus on the Supplier of all our needs. However, handled well, these quizzes can unite churches and create an intentional effort to seek, find, love, and obey what God has revealed of Himself and His will through a particular text.

### Leadership training

In recent years, two Associations have had multiple churches participate together in leadership training. The curriculum was developed by people in those Associations for their particular needs, and then shared with those who wanted more training in their desire to serve God in a local church.

In both Associations, the training was extensive, requiring everyone involved to make a significant commitment of time, energy, and effort. In one case, participants met once a month for more than a year to cover the topics and to provide the necessary interaction to reach their goal.

### Add your idea here

Are you aware of something that your Association of churches needs to be doing in the realm of Christian education? If so, what is it?

Let someone else know of the need you have seen. Think about how that need can be met and talk with others about how to accomplish that. What can *you* do in your Association to spur one another on to seek, find, love, and obey God? **SR**





## Healthy goals in Malawi

by Kirk Looper

Statistically, healthcare in Malawi is among the worst in the world. Life expectancy is 44 years, and out of 233 births, only 100 infants survive. A paltry 234 children out of 1,000 reach the age of 5. These sad numbers have changed only marginally in the last 10 years, and they are expected to worsen because of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

This dreaded disease is now the leading cause of death in the most productive age group (15 to 48) and accounts for 40 percent of all in-patient admissions—another figure that is likely to increase.

The rate of both HIV and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) is extremely high in Malawi. This, in turn, has led to a sharp increase in the number of AIDS-related orphans. Primary Health Care (PHC) is not adequate for most of the larger populace.

The Chipho PHC/HIV/AIDS project was launched in 2000. It operates out of a clinic in the Thyolo District, an area greatly affected by a famine in 2002-2003. The town of Chipho has an illiteracy rate of about 70 percent, and acute poverty and various diseases continually plague its inhabitants.

Chipho has one health center, belonging to the Seventh Day Baptist Conference in Malawi. The staff is supported by the Church Association of Malawi (CHAM).

The center has been providing public health talks and clinics for children under 5, as well as maternity assistance and outreach. The aim of the Chipho project is to assist the community by preventing disease, controlling its spread, and providing care for those afflicted.

The Chipho Health Center has a potential clientele of about 13,000 people from 14 villages with differing cultural backgrounds and practices. The Health Surveillance Assistant compiled a report showing that there are 707 orphans, many due to the pandemic spread of AIDS and other infectious diseases. Only 546 of these children attend free primary schools, while 17 are of secondary school age but lack the necessary school fees. The rest often work as servants in the homes of well-to-do residents.

Currently, the project is exploring ways to reach the people of neighboring communities in Mozambique. Most people living on the outskirts of the Health Center practice “dangerous” cultural beliefs and unhygienic self-medication.

The overall goal of the proposed strengthening of Chipho is to ensure increased sensitivity and support for behavioral change, orphan care, and reproductive health services in 90 percent of the surrounding population areas. The plan is to work hand-in-hand with existing governmental organizations such as the District AIDS Coordinating Committee and the District Health Office.

They will also work with non-governmental agencies and other related institutions in the Thyolo District involved in HIV/AIDS programs. They will bring increased primary healthcare and reproductive health services to the communities surrounding the Chipho Health Center.

Efforts will be made to increase the PHC’s activities at the Center, with the aim of encouraging men and youth to participate in PHC services. Officials plan to set up village health committees that will be drawn from surrounding communities. The program

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***The plan in Malawi is to work hand-in-hand with existing governmental organizations. They will bring increased primary healthcare and reproductive health services to the communities surrounding the Chipho Health Center.***

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will cover sanitation, prevention of air and water-borne diseases, and communication skills for reporting disease outbreaks.

The program at Chipho will include forming and training anti-AIDS youth clubs in four areas for faster distribution of information; forming and training orphan-care support groups; and promoting voluntary counseling and testing services. The areas of focus are primary prevention, mother-to-child transmission (MTCT) prevention, and orphan care.

We pray that enough people will become interested in this project to raise the \$73,000 it will take to see that it succeeds. We believe that the work in Malawi will surge ahead with the addition of this project.

Praise God for the opportunity to help others! **SR**



# the BEACON

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

March 2004

## Relying on faith

by Sarah Tyson

While driving, have you ever hit one of those speed bumps that you know you should have slowed down for but didn't? Your car takes a beating, doesn't it?

Well, that's what I was putting myself through—and my chances for college—during my junior year. I thought that one more year of high school was a waste of time; I needed to "spread my wings."

My future plans for life pointed toward community college, but that didn't strike me as my ideal destination. So I started looking into four-year schools, oblivious to the stress to come.

During spring break in 2003, I visited Oklahoma by myself. I was so happy and couldn't wait to go! I had heard all about the farms, open ranges, and the "good ol' days" there from my grandfather. Growing up in Half Moon Bay, Calif., it was hard to relate to those stories.

On my Oklahoma vacation, I was met with a calmer, more peaceful, and slower way of life than I was used to. My first day there, I even got to see a tornado! I felt a need to be there to help my aging family, make changes in my life, and especially to grow closer to God—a task that would be best for me in a new environment. But I had no idea how I was going to make my new dream come true.

After stressing out about it for a while, I suddenly realized that I had left God behind in my plans. I had left Him out because I didn't think He would give me what I wanted. I realize now that that is no excuse.

I finally "broke" the night before my ACT exam. I confided in the Lord and told Him that I knew I couldn't do it alone. I handed over all of the stress, pain, and chance of disappointment because I knew He could take all of it away and give me peace instead.

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***I had  
gone through  
just about every-  
thing written about  
in that song—except  
for the speeding ticket.***

On the morning of the ACT, I heard Out of Eden's song, "Day Like Today," playing on the radio, and I could totally identify. I had gone through just about everything written about in that song—except for the speeding ticket.

Knowing that the sun is going to shine your way sure keeps your spirit pumping! When you take the wrong exit and head in the wrong direction, you can laugh and know that God is sitting next to you.

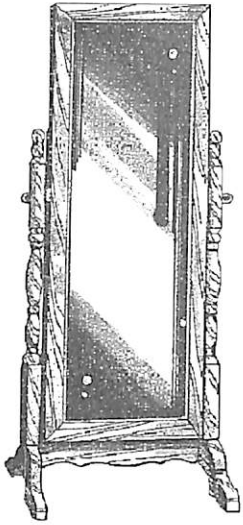
I thought that getting into a bigger college would be great, but then I realized that the plans God might have for me in my own small town would be just as great. Why? Because they would be *His* plans.

After that day, college wasn't something I stressed out about. When I started calling schools to find out if I was accepted, I was ready for their decision.

However, God answered my prayers. I was on top of the world when I found out that I was accepted by my first-choice school! I am proud to say that I am in the Oklahoma Baptist University graduating class of 2008.

So, keep the faith! The Lord may not answer your prayers the way you want, but far greater things will come. Just know that the sun (and Son!) is going to shine your way. **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*

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## Aging: I'll get over it

Like many of my contemporaries, I have trouble accepting the fact that I'm getting old. When I was younger, I thought that aging was something that only older people did. Now that I *am* "older people," I realize that I've been doing it since I drew my first breath.

My difficulty in accepting aging is fueled by our society's view of the elderly; a view that goes against the biblical directive, "Rise in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly..." (Leviticus 19:32).

In countries like Japan, older people are revered. But in the United States, young is good, old is bad. Every year, Americans spend billions of dollars on youth-promoting products and plastic surgeries to try to halt the aging process—a natural process that God infused with goodness. In Psalm 92, we're told, "They [the righteous] will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green" (NIV).

Aging is often hard to accept because of its natural consequences.

During my youth, I was a relatively short speedster who could outrun all of my long-legged classmates. Today, every 8-year-old in church can beat me in a mad dash to our monthly Meal of Sharing buffet table.

Several years ago, my passion for bowling was quelled by a wrist, arm, and shoulder beset with every form of "-itis" known to man, including tendonitis and bursitis. (I later threw

in a cyst and tennis elbow for good measure.)

By my early 40s, I had trouble seeing and eventually owned every form of eyeglasses known to man: "plain" lenses, bifocals, trifocals, and magnifying reading glasses.

Today, I'm older than my doctor, my dentist, my tax accountant, my insurance agent, my pastor, and my boss. (Both Rev. George Calhoun and Editor Extraordinaire Kevin Butler are *12 years* younger.)

My hair started graying many years ago. Although I knew that "gray hair is the splendor of the old" (Proverbs 20:29), I finally couldn't tolerate

We can opt for root canals and avoid dentures. We have digital hearing aids and cochlear implants to fight deafness. Acupuncture and bio-feedback help ward off pain, while cataract surgery renews vision. Even heart and kidney transplants are commonplace. (*Reader's Digest* reported that some scientists are even working on head transplants, but I think I'll pass on that.)

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***By my early 40s, I had trouble seeing and eventually owned every form of eyeglasses known to man: "plain" lenses, bifocals, trifocals, and magnifying reading glasses.***

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all that splendor anymore. So now I'm a chemically-induced brunette, and only my hairdresser (and the world) knows for sure.

Besides "coloring" my hair, I made another drastic change: I no longer avoid wearing a name tag at church since it helps remind me who I am.

It's tempting to think of aging only in negative terms: weak knees, weak kidneys, weak brains. But God gave us creative minds, resulting in medical advances that allow us to age much more gracefully than our parents or grandparents.

When I was in grade school, anyone 70-something was deemed elderly. Today, people in their 80s and 90s remain alert and active.

As we continue to age, we need to focus on the fact that longevity is a gift from God, and that we should embrace it wholeheartedly. In spite of the drawbacks, additional years mean additional time to witness to others about God's saving grace. And those who live long enough to be blessed with grandchildren and great-grandchildren will have new generations to teach and nurture. **SR**



*(Host Committee worker Terry Van Horn provides our page this month.)*

"I've got bad news and good news," Pastor Dale Thorngate announced from the pulpit to his Salem, W.Va., congregation last October.

The bad news, he explained, was that plans to hold the 2004 Conference meetings in his native state of Michigan had run into a scheduling conflict. The good news was that Salem would "host" Conference once again on the West Virginia Wesleyan College campus in Buckhannon, one year earlier than expected!

Fortunately, the people at West Virginia Wesleyan know the SDB General Conference and were able to welcome us back even with such relatively short notice. And the people of the Appalachian Association know what to do to prepare for our fellow SDBs from all over the continent, having worked with the college in 1995, 1998, and 2000.

Pastor Dale contacted Gary Martin Sr., who had served as Assistant Chairman of the 1995 Host Committee. Gary agreed to head up the 2004 Host Committee and went to work right away preparing for what the Host Committee hopes will be the

## *The President's Page*

by Dale Thorngate

# We're doing what? Where? When? Wow!

biggest and best West Virginia Conference yet.

If you were able to attend any of those three previous Conferences in Buckhannon, you know that Wesleyan is an ideal facility. In the center of a lovely campus is the spacious Wesley Chapel—a comfortable, air-conditioned location for all general business meetings and worship services. Dormitories, cafeteria, gymnasium, and other meeting rooms are all easily accessible around a level, grassy rectangle in front of the chapel.

Buckhannon is a college town of about 6,000 in the heart of the Mountain State, linked by 13 miles of four-lane highway to Interstate 79. It's a little less than an hour's drive from the Salem SDB Church and only a half-hour away from the Lost Creek church.

Many like to combine Conference with a summer vacation, and West Virginians are proud of the many beautiful things to see within easy driving distance from Buckhannon, including several lakes and state parks. Call toll-free (1-800-CALL WVA) or "log on" to [www.callwva.com](http://www.callwva.com) for the official state travel guide, camping and lodging directories, state map, and other information about area attractions.

Pastor Dale's "bad news, good news" announcement was a surprise—but a nice one—for all of us who live here. We're excited about helping to prepare for a great Conference, and we look forward to seeing old friends and making new ones in Buckhannon during the week of August 1-7. Start making plans to attend! **SR**

## 2004 Conference Host Committee

*Chairman*—Gary Martin Sr.  
*Asst. Chairman*—Scott Smith  
*Registration*—Chad and Laura Lee Modesitt, Nellie Jo Brissey, Cynthia Brissey  
*Treasurer*—Diana Housel  
*Transportation*—Fred Spencer III  
*Communications*—Lydia Davis, Terry Van Horn  
*Pre-Con Coordinator*—Andrew Camenga  
*Camp Joy Coordinator*—Vickie Perine  
*Young Adult Pre-Con Coordi-*

*nator*—Scott Smith  
*Receptions*—Peggy Meathrell  
*Exhibits*—Marie Penfold  
*Medical*—Paul Davis, Christina Cain  
*Facilities Coordinator*—Norman Green  
*Equip/Audio Visual*—Larry Lawrence  
*Nursery*—Dixie Spencer, Jessie Sias  
*Flowers*—Terry Van Horn  
*Youth Advisor*—Scott Smith  
*Salem Youth President*—Shawn Blackwell

## Group plans Mexico trip

by Tiffany Anne Crowder

The Mid-Continent Association churches are headed to Mexico! The Soaring Eagles Youth Group (Boulder, Colo., SDB Church) invites any and all interested teens or adults to participate with us. Different youth groups have started many fund raisers, and we teens are “pumped”!

We plan to go to Mexico during the second week of June to assist our sister church in Madero, on the Gulf Coast. Please keep us in your prayers as we make this journey.

Although some of our leaders have been there, this is a first for us teens. We look for growth in our spiritual walk and hope to please the Lord.

Any fund-raising ideas?? We would love your support and wisdom before we go. To learn more about our mission trip, or to share stories and important information, contact Patty Petersen at (303) 460-7520. Or e-mail her at ppetersen57@hotmail.com.

May God be with us in this new adventure! **SR**



*[Editor's note: A group from White Cloud, Mich., plans to return to Mexico in April, continuing their outreach and literature distribution in Madero. They also hope to minister to several contacts in Mexico City.]*

## Pure waters flow in White Cloud

by Michelle Crandall



White Cloud

### MICHIGAN

Many of you are familiar with the motto that heralds White Cloud, Mich., as the land “Where the north begins and the pure waters flow.”

The second part of this phrase has never been truer. Since May of 2003, our church has baptized 32 people, with plans to baptize more soon.

The *pure water* of the Holy Spirit is *flowing* through our community with the grace of God’s redemption. This is exciting! He is drawing people

The people we have seen moved by the Holy Spirit represent a blend of those who have grown up in our congregation, along with others who are

**Since May of 2003,  
our church has baptized  
32 people, with plans  
to baptize more  
soon.**

to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior and to show their commitment through baptism.

Baptism is important as a public and outward recognition of our salvation. It signals a turning or changing point in our lives. Suddenly, we are dead to the past, washed in the pure water of God’s redeeming love, and raised to live again as New Creatures in Christ.

new to our worship services and fellowship.

God has been faithful in adding members to our church as well. In the past year alone, we have voted in 11 new members, bringing our average attendance to 75-90 weekly.

God’s work is never dull! His faithfulness and encouragement to do His will makes our work on earth exciting. **SR**

# Seeking a place of our own in Columbus

After many years of renting a meeting facility, our church in Columbus, Ohio, has decided to try and find a place of our own.

We started by having workshops led by our pastor, Robert Van Horn, and by Pastor John Camenga of the Daytona Beach, Fla., church. These workshops centered on: *What is our mission? What is the health status of our church? What would the facility of our choice look like?*

For fund raising, we've started with:

- a Penny War (thanks, Boulder, Colo., YF, for the write-up in the *SR*) in which \$490.00 was raised
- pledges above current giving (we have received pledges of \$425 per month)

- designated November as letter-writing campaign month
- Meijer's grocery rewards system
- planned future rummage sales, etc.

We also have approached the Memorial Board for funding.

A committee is already working to bring a recommendation to the church on location and facility. They are researching where the

church facility needs to be located, and will recommend either buying land and building a facility, or remodeling some existing structure.

Please pray for us as we seek the Lord's leading! If you would like to help financially, we would appreciate any donation. Designate it "Building Fund" and send it to our treasurer, Dean Fox, 1722 Taylor Station Rd., Blacklick OH 43004. *SR*

## Is God passing us by?

*(Continued from page 11)*

us, if we stand in pride. Who are we praying to? Ourselves, or Jesus?

Let's show mercy to those outside the realm of Christianity. Let's teach grace to those who do not know what the word means. Are we merely messengers of the Sabbath? Or are we messengers of grace and mercy, also?

Let's think outside the box and inside God's will. Let's quit sharing our distinctives alone. Let's share Jesus.

I'm tired of being passed by. Are you?

May God bless Seventh Day Baptists as we seek to reach the world. But let us seek the ways *He* would have us reach this dying world, which is outside our walls.

We, in Colorado, are seeking new and exciting ways to reach the lost. What is *your* church doing? *SR*

*L.B. Lee is pastor of the Colorado Springs, Colo., Seventh Day Baptist Church.*



*The adult Helping Hand class in Columbus.*



*Kindergarten-3rd.*



*Young adults.*



*Junior high.*



*Squeezing in for dinner.*



*The nursery Sabbath School.*

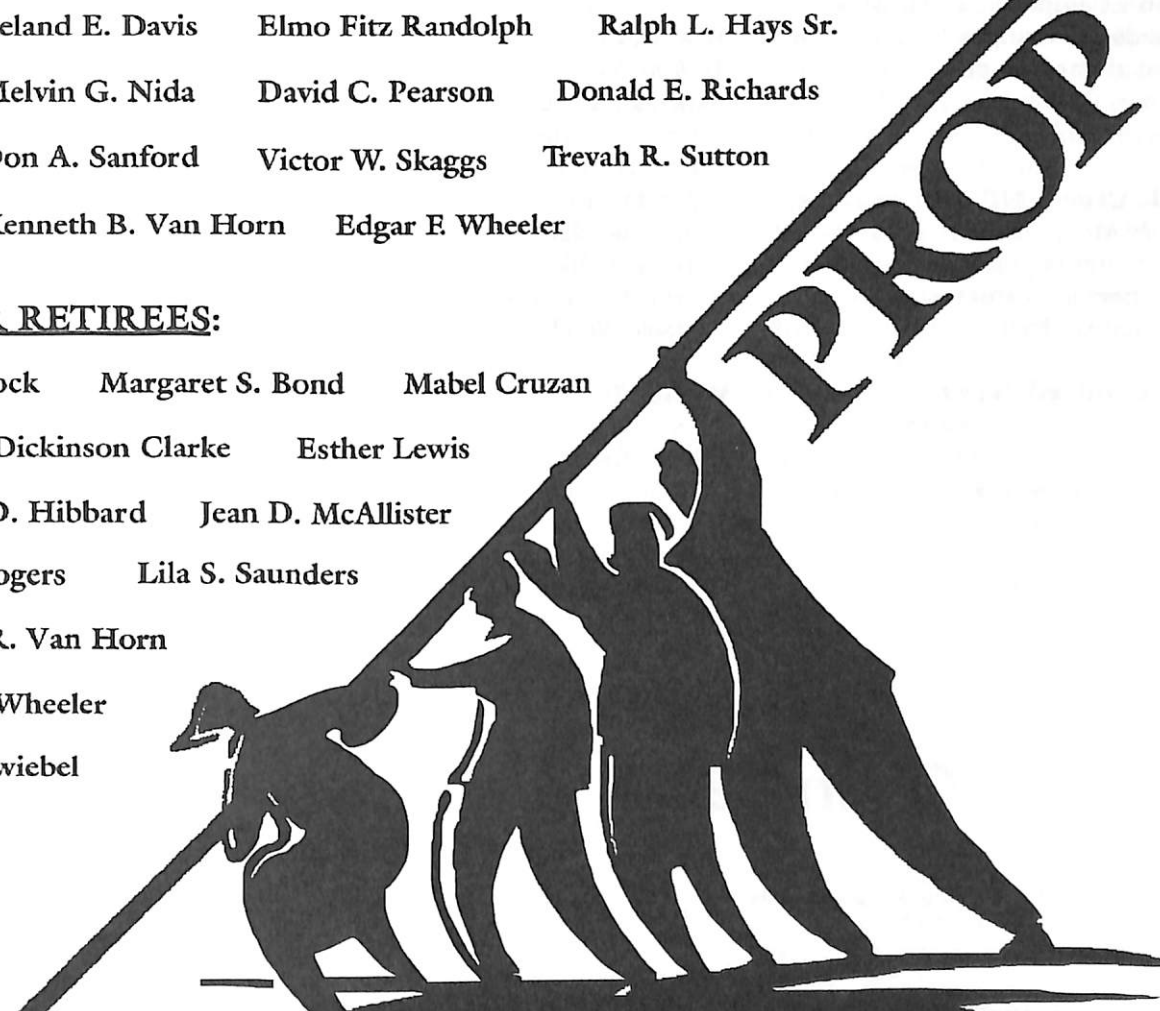
*Give to those who gave so much.*

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 F. 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

## New members

### Atlanta (Metro), GA

*Luis Lovelace, pastor*

Joined after baptism

Rachel Hargett

Corey Campbell

Chadwyck Campbell

Joined after testimony

James Dobbs

Joyce Dobbs

### Battle Creek, MI

*Harold King, pastor*

Joined after baptism

Michael E. Travers

William J. Fick

### Fort Lauderdale, FL

*Andrew Samuels, pastor*

Joined after baptism

Andrew Edwards

Laurie Knight

Mia Knight

Jennifer Mitchell

Joined after testimony

Cormeth Lawrence

Lois Lawrence

Yvonne Shaw-Davis

### Miami, FL

*Andrew Samuels, pastor*

Joined after baptism

Stefan Buddle

Marvin Phillips

Nardine Rene

Francine Saunders

Tamara Takacs

Joined after testimony

Stacie Woods

### White Cloud, MI

*Bernie Wethington, pastor*

Joined after testimony

Dennis Nagle

Trish Nagle

Matt Priest

Laura Priest

## Marriage

**Sequin - Fenstermacher.**—Pete Sequin and Carrie Fenstermacher were united in marriage on October 18, 2003, at the home of the late Tom and Susan Bond in Lost Creek, WV. Pastor Don Shackelford officiated.

## Death Notices

**Rev. Gordon D. Oliver, 87,** of Texarkana, TX, died on December 20, 2003.

**Marjorie E. Crandall, 83,** of Milton, WI, died on January 13, 2004.

**Chester A. Bonham, 89,** of Hopewell Township, NJ, died on January 15, 2004.

**Wilna (Van Horn) Wilson, 90,** of Westerly, RI, died on January 20, 2004.

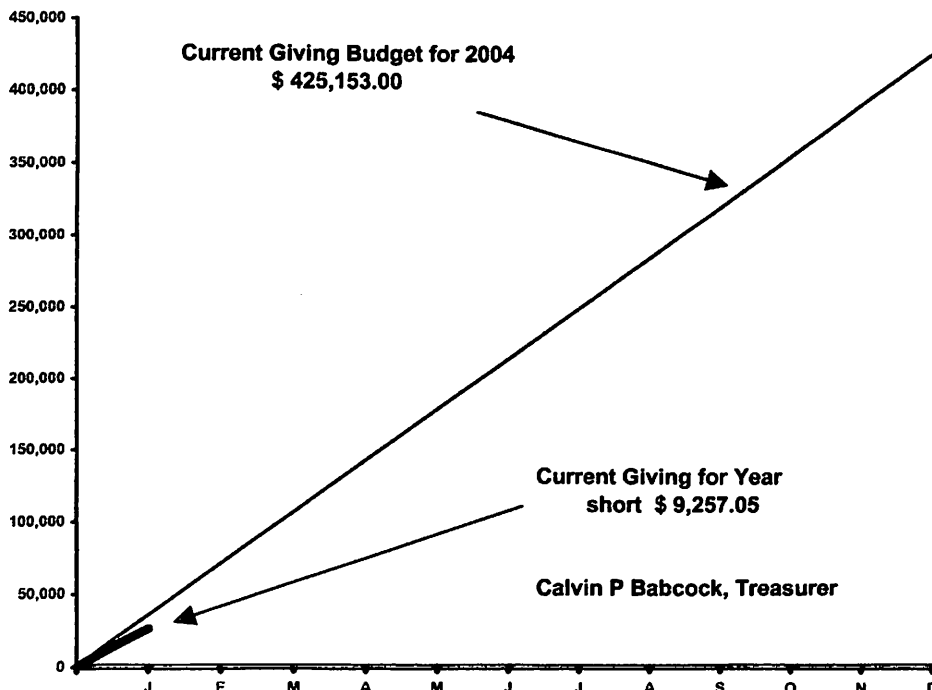
**Margaret (Lowther) Smitley Burdick, 88,** of Milton, WI, died on January 27, 2004.

**Roselyn Vis,** of West Palm Beach, FL, died on January 28, 2004.

**Ed Johnson, 89,** of Nortonville, KS, died on February 7, 2004.

**Miss Sarah Becker, 90,** of Centralia, WA, died on February 12, 2004.

## Current Giving 2004





# Obituaries

**Davis.**—Stanley F. Davis died at age 105 on November 16, 2003, at his home in Lafayette, La., following a brief illness.

He was born on September 1, 1898, in Bristol, W. Va., the son of Stephen Jesse and Emma (Fox) Davis. His ancestors were among the founders of the Salem, W. Va., SDB Church.

At age 6, the Davises moved to Fouke, Ark. He later attended Alfred (N.Y.) University. During World War I, he worked on his father's farm, taught school, and was employed by a bank in Kansas City, Mo.

In July of 1919, he joined the Gulf Oil Company in Eastland, Texas. In 1921, he signed up with an exploratory drilling company in South America, and for the next 25 years helped pioneer the petroleum industry there. He married a beautiful Colombian girl, Blanca Livia Vásquez, who died in 1997.

Stanley returned to the U.S. in 1944, making his home in southwest Louisiana. He opened and operated four NAPA stores, but eventually sold them and retired. In the 1950s, he moved to Lafayette and again worked in the oil industry.

Stanley was a lifelong member of SDB churches in Fouke and Texarkana, Ark. He was also a member of the Masonic Order, the Pioneer Oilfield People Club, the Exxon Annuitants Club, and the close-knit "Little Oilfield Group."

Survivors include two daughters, Wilma Dartez and Emma Lerille; eight grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews. In addition to his wife, he was predeceased by four brothers and two sisters.

Funeral services were held on November 18, 2003, at the Martin and Castille Funeral Home. The Rev. Mynor Soper conducted a brief graveside service on November 19 at the Fouke Community Cemetery.

**Williams.**—Iva Marie Williams, 94, of Scotia, Neb., died on November 30, 2003, at the Greeley (Neb.) Care Home.

She was born on November 13, 1909, south of North Loup, Neb., the daughter of Michael and Iva (Barker) Whalen. She spent most of her early years in the Fussyville neighborhood, attending the Fussyville District 24 school through the 10th grade before going to high school in Scotia.

On November 29, 1927, she married Ross Williams in Ord, Neb. They lived on farms south of North Loup, later moving into town where they operated the Williams Oil Company. Iva was a school bus driver and a member of the North Loup Seventh Day Baptist Church.

Prior to her husband's death in 1989, she and Ross celebrated their 50th and 60th wedding anniversaries. Iva later moved to Scotia to be near her daughter. In July of 1999, she moved to the Greeley Care Home.

Survivors include a son, Jim, of Minneapolis, Minn.; one daughter, Delores Van Slyke of Scotia; one brother, Mike Whalen of Inglewood, Calif.; six grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandson. In addition to her husband, she was preceded in death by two brothers, two sisters, and six stepbrothers and sisters.

Funeral services were held on December 4, 2003, at the North Loup SDB Church, with Rev. Chris Mattison officiating. Burial was in the Hillside Cemetery, North Loup.

**DeLand.**—Arabeth M. DeLand, 85, of Battle Creek, Mich., passed away quietly at home on December 9, 2003. Active to the very end, she had sung in two Christmas concerts earlier in the day. Arabeth was born on May 17, 1918, in Battle Creek, the elder daughter of

Dr. W.B. and Allie (Dealing) Lewis. Her early life centered on her family and on youth activities at the Battle Creek Sanitarium, Christian Endeavor Society, and the Seventh Day Baptist church. She was valedictorian of the Class of 1936 at Battle Creek Central High School.

After earning a B.A. degree in biology and music at Milton (Wis.) College, she married LeRoy Deland on August 19, 1940, in Battle Creek. He died in 1973.

She served on the SDB Women's Board (secretary and president) and the Christian Social Action Committee. She held several offices in the Battle Creek church's Ladies Aid, taught Sabbath School, served as church secretary for five years, and volunteered as a director and cook at Camp Holston.

She was also a delegate to Michigan Church Women United (they named her "Valiant Woman of the Year" in 1999) and that state's Council of Churches. She represented SDBs at the Baptist World Alliance Convention in Canada, and volunteered at the local ecumenical association, seeking throughout her life to be a faithful witness for Jesus.

Arabeth directed various choirs and participated in many musical organizations. She also worked in her husband's medical office, was employed by Lusterock, the Mid Counties Training Consortium, and the Legal Services Organization of southcentral Michigan.

Her lifelong interests included music, reading, corresponding with friends and family, and growing specialty roses. She also loved watching birds and butterflies.

Survivors include three children, Laurie Lasrado of West Chester, Ohio, Marylene Tuck of Battle Creek, and Lee DeLand of Talbott, Tenn.; six grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, one nephew, one niece, and

*cont. on next page*

three grandnieces. In addition to her husband, she was predeceased by her older brother, Welcome. Arabeth's sister, Madelene Parrish, died just four days after her, on December 13.

Funeral services were held on December 13, 2003, in the Battle Creek SDB Church with Pastors Harold King and Kory Geske officiating. Burial followed in Memorial Park Cemetery, Battle Creek.

**Parrish.**—Violet Madelene

Parrish, 82, of Pennfield, Michigan, died at her home on December 13, 2003.

She was born on July 28, 1921, in Battle Creek, Mich., the daughter of Dr. Welcome B. and Allie (Dealing) Lewis. She lived all of her life in Battle Creek and was a 1939 graduate of Battle Creek Central High School.

On August 24, 1941, she married George Edwin Parrish, who died in 1994.

"Madelene" attended Milton (Wis.) College for two years and was employed as a laboratory technician at the Battle Creek Sanitarium. She also worked in the office of D. Clarence Mercer during World War II. She later was the office manager for the family businesses until she and her husband retired in 1986.

The Parrishes were charter members of the Pennfield Elementary PTA and loved to travel.

Mrs. Parrish was involved in music from an early age. While in college, she sang in a quartet on a weekly radio program in Janesville, Wis.

She was a member and soloist in the Battle Creek Seventh Day Baptist Church choir and for many other musical groups.

Madelene was a member of the Battle Creek church for 69 years, at different times filling offices of treasurer, clerk, youth advisor, camp business manager, and chairman of the Trustees. At the time of her death, she was treasurer of the Ladies Aid Society and a member of the Board of Deacons. She served as president of both the Michigan SDB Churches and the North Central Association.

Survivors include one son, Robert, of West Bloomfield, Mich., and one daughter, Judith Parrish of Battle Creek; five grandchildren, and cherished nieces and nephews. Her brother, Welcome B. Lewis Jr., died in 1938. A sister, Arabeth Deland, preceded her in death by four days.

A memorial service was held on December 17, 2003, at the Richard A. Henry Funeral Home, with Rev. Harold King officiating.

**Babcock.**—Kenneth A. Babcock, 92, died on December 16, 2003, at the Parkview Care Center in Ripon, Wis.

He was born on July 7, 1911, in Milton, Wis., the son of Louis Arlington and Lettie (Landphere) Babcock. On August 14, 1935, he married Flora E. Smith in Verona, N.Y., beginning 65 years together. She died on June 13, 2000.

Ken graduated from Milton College in 1933, then enrolled at Oberlin (Ohio) College Conservatory of Music for graduate studies. He taught vocal music at Milton Union High School and at Milton Grade School from 1935 until 1947.

In 1947, he became the manager for the 50-voice Milton College Choir, securing concert dates. He also became executive secretary of the college's Alumni Association. In 1951, he became the corporate fundraiser for the school.

Ken was a member of the Milton Seventh Day Baptist Church. From 1939-1970, he was the soloist for another church in Janesville, and sang at many area weddings and memorial services. In 1970, the Babcocks moved to Ripon, where he served as the director of corporate support programs for Ripon College. After retiring in 1976, they returned to Milton. In 1998, they moved back to the Ripon area.

Survivors include three daughters, Jeanette Freigang of Hemlock, Mich., Virginia Field of Berlin, and Sue Foster of Saginaw, Mich.; eight grandchildren, and 13 great-grandchildren. In addition to his wife, he was predeceased by one brother, Laurance; one

sister, Margaret Blackburn Wickham, and a nephew.

Funeral services were held on December 22, 2003, at the Milton SDB Church, with Pastor George Calhoun officiating. Burial was in the Milton Cemetery.

**Skaggs.**—Prof. J. Leland Skaggs, 91, died on Dec. 25, 2003, at the Milton (Wis.) Senior Living retirement home.

He was born on February 27, 1912, in Shiloh, N.J., the son of Rev. James L. and Hettie Skaggs. His father was a Seventh Day Baptist pastor and the family moved several times before assuming the pastorate in Milton when Leland was a teenager.

Following Milton Union High School, he graduated from Milton College in 1933. He also attended Columbia University. During the Depression, he taught in New York City at CONY and for the WPA.

In 1942, he married Mary Elizabeth Bond in Salem, W.Va. He served in the Army during World War II, teaching radio for the Signal Corps in New Jersey. After the war, he became a mathematics professor at Milton College.

Apart from the Korean War—when he was recalled as an Army Lieutenant to command a basic training company in Georgia—he continued to work at Milton College until his retirement. He taught math, served as registrar for many years, and was appointed interim acting president.

Leland was an active member and deacon of the Milton SDB Church.

He is survived by his wife, Mary; two sons, James A. of Madison, Wis., and Samuel B. of Milwaukee, Wis.; two sisters, Margaret Bond of Shiloh, N.J., and Evalyn Camenga of Daytona Beach, Fla.; and one brother, Rev. Victor Skaggs of Longmont, Colo.

Funeral services were held on December 29, 2003, at the Milton SDB Church. Pastor George Calhoun officiated. Burial was in the Milton Cemetery.

# KEVIN'S

## ORNER

I admit it. I am a “radio nut.”

Years ago, I even got a cloth patch at the New York State Fair that says those very words.

Sitting here at my desk at home, I can look up and count eight (yup, eight) radios within sight. It would have been nine, but I just gave the boys one of my mini-stereos for their bedroom. And I’m not sure how many more little listening devices are in the closet behind me.

I am a radio nut. I buy ‘em, sell ‘em, collect ‘em. And once in a while I actually *listen* to them! I would rather *hear* a news report than read it or watch it.

This radio menagerie provides me with all kinds of information, not to mention some wonderful inspiration from a wide spectrum of music over the air-waves.

Janet has been fairly patient with my obsession—it had started before we met. I spent hours and hours pretending to be a disc jockey in my early years, and that hobby became a reality in college and right after seminary when I worked for a Christian station in Madison, Wis.

So, a certain 2002 Christmas gift from a certain spouse caught a certain editor by total surprise. But there it was. In the final gift box of the day, it was the very last thing in the world I expected from her.

A radio!

Not just *any* radio, mind you. This was an “XM” radio, part of a new satellite network with over 100 different channels of “you name it” listening. Every kind of music and talk and sports and news, 24-hours-a-day, and

most of them commercial-free. It’s a radio nut’s paradise.

But more amazing than the radio itself was the source of the surprise gift. Janet knows how many radios I have. (Well, she probably doesn’t, but...) She knew I had been saving up and fantasizing about “going XM.” Before I could get to the nearest electronic store, there was my dream-come-true, right on my lap. I was stunned!

“I thought you said you’d never get me another radio!” I exclaimed.

“Well,” she said, “I figured that you were going to get it anyway!”

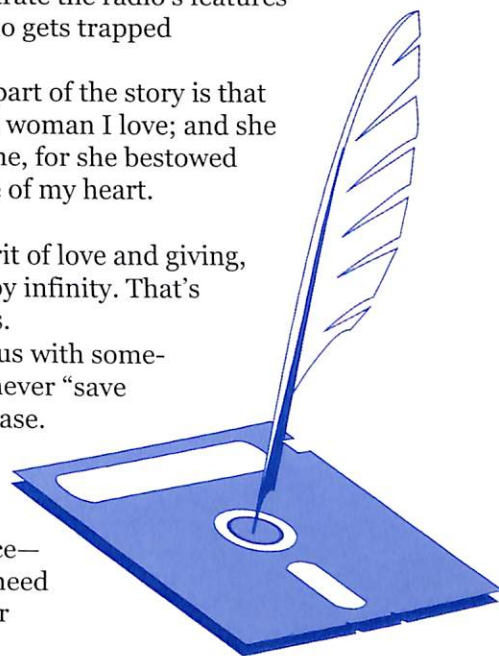
I have thanked her throughout the year, and happily demonstrate the radio’s features to any visitor who gets trapped into listening.

And the best part of the story is that it came from the woman I love; and she sure must love me, for she bestowed on me the desire of my heart.

Take that spirit of love and giving, and multiply it by infinity. That’s God’s love for us.

He surprises us with something we could never “save up” for or purchase.

His gift of eternal life—through faith in Jesus’ sacrifice—is a present we need to thank Him for every day.

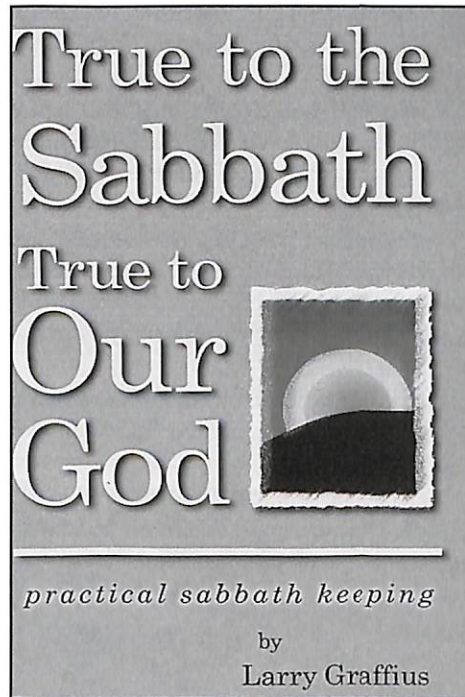


## The end is near! (for the Attendance Contest)

Last time we checked in with our intrepid pastors, the Alfred Station, N.Y., church held a commanding lead over our church in San Gabriel, Calif. (like, by 45, dudes).

Recent surges out West and snowstorms out East have closed the gap to less than 20!

Tune in next month for the exciting conclusion!



Why is Sabbath keeping  
a significant principle  
for believers?

What does it mean to  
keep the Sabbath  
Holy?

How do we practice  
Sabbath keeping  
today?

*True to the Sabbath, True to Our God* by Rev. Larry Graffius, is a fresh, relevant Bible Study of God's command to "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." You will discover new meaning and practical application of this often overlooked principle of Christian living.

God has designed the Sabbath as a day of rest, worship, blessing, and service. As you explore these exciting topics, you will be challenged to a deeper level of consistency and commitment in your spiritual life.

To order your copy, send \$11.50 (\$9.95 plus \$1.55 shipping and handling) to:

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