

SR The Sabbath RECORDER

January 2005

News for and about Seventh Day Baptists



Missions

How do you
measure their
importance?



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.

For 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@seventhdaybaptist.org and the SDB Web site: www.seventhdaybaptist.org

Pastors' Conference

April 19-23, 2005



"Living in the Light"
(studies from Ephesians)
Alfred Station, N.Y.

SCSC 2005

Team Member applications for Summer Christian Service Corps are due by **January 15**.
Church Project applications are due by **February 1**.



For more information and your application, contact

Grace Crouch
at:

rgcrouch@netzero.com.

GENERAL SERVICES

BOARD of CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Make TWICE TWICE the Difference

Ever wish that your money could go twice as far?
Ever pray that your ministry donation could make TWICE the impact?

In a bold and generous move, the Seventh Day Baptist Memorial Fund trustees have opened a window of opportunity where you can **make TWICE the difference**. From now until the end of February, the Memorial Fund will **MATCH ALL GIFTS** earmarked for any SDB board or agency.

Want to make your gift through your local church?
It will be matched.

Does your church tithe to the Conference? *It will be matched.*

Care to send an undesignated gift toward our overall ministry and budget? *It will be matched.*

Please send your designated gift or general donation to:

"Twice the Difference"
Seventh Day Baptist Center
PO Box 1678
Janesville WI 53547-1678

Your gifts may also be sent directly to these specific SDB ministries, or made through your local church treasurer.

THANK YOU for making Twice the Difference!

CENTER ON MINISTRY

CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ACTION

ECUMENICAL AFFAIRS

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MISSIONARY SOCIETY

TRACT and COMMUNICATION COUNCIL

WOMEN'S SOCIETY



Establ. 1844

January 2005
Volume 227, No. 1
Whole No. 6,902

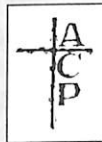


A Seventh Day Baptist publication

The Sabbath Recorder (ISSN 0036-214X) (USPS 474460) is published monthly (combined July & August) by the SDB General Conference's Tract and Communication Council, 3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678. This publication is distributed at no cost to members and friends of Seventh Day Baptist churches and is made possible by donations from its readers. Printed in Canada. Periodicals postage paid at Janesville, WI, and additional offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Sabbath Recorder, 3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678

This is the 160th year of publication for The Sabbath Recorder. First issue published, June 13, 1844. Member of the Associated Church Press. The Sabbath Recorder does not necessarily endorse signed articles.



Kevin Butler
Editor

Leanne Lippincott
Assistant Editor

EC = Editor's Circle members

Contributing Editors

Rob Appel, Andrew J. Camenga, Don Graffius, Gordon Lawton, Jenn Layton, G. Kirk Looper, Laura Price, Don A. Sanford.

WRITERS: Please type manuscripts double spaced. Only manuscripts that include a stamped, addressed envelope can be returned. Unsolicited manuscripts are welcomed; however, they will be considered on a space available basis. No remuneration is given for any article that appears in this publication. Paid advertising is not accepted.

Features — Missions 2005

Articles by Kirk Looper:

Sierra Leone: Churches growing along with challenges 4
Longtime mission must now build a permanent office.

Striving to meet needs in Malawi 6
SDB clinic promotes basic health education.

Articles by Ron Elston:

Visibility matters 8
Visual images are important to a church.

Fall revival at Faith 8
Good preaching, good music, and three baptisms!

Good visit in Yakima 9
Independent group supports SDBs.

North Loup sponsors new work in Lincoln 9
Seeds getting planted in Lincoln, Neb.

New pastor at Faith SDB 10
Dennis Staggs is installed in Doniphan, Mo.

Presenting His Word in Grandview 10
A new work begins in Washington state.

Exploring the Sabbath 11
by Linda Greene
This continuing study gets us up to Isaiah 56.

Departments

Women's Society 12
Important correspondence

Pearls from the Past 14
A 385-year-old covenant

Christian Education 16
Forward thinking

Focus 17
Gospel spread in Argentina

The Beacon 18
When you've reached that certain point

Reflections 19
Redeem the time

President's Page 20
Time to take inventory

Vision 2020 21
New Year = New Vision

Local news 22-23
Top Baptist stories 22
Holland, MI 23

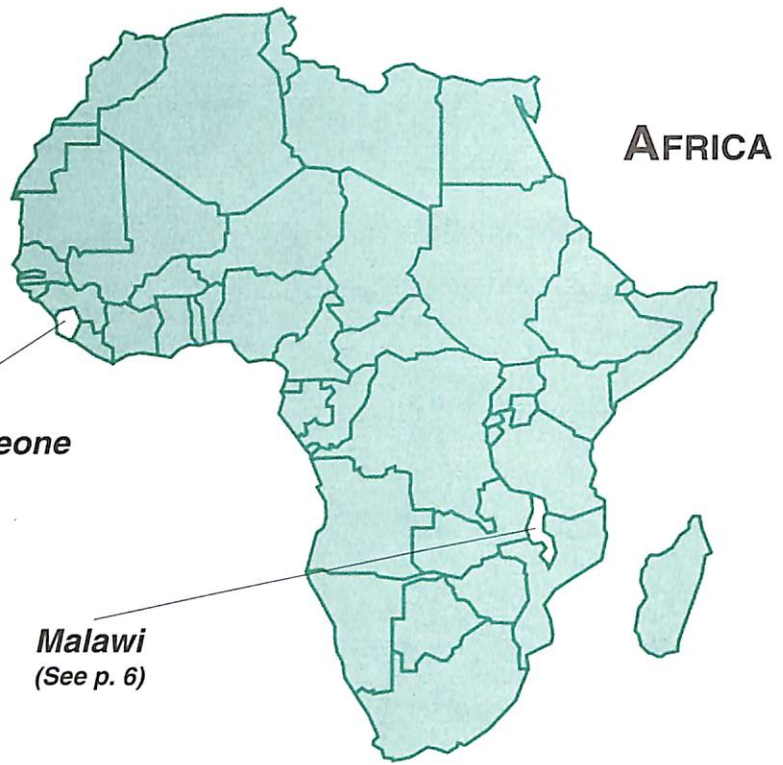
Family flux 24-25
New members, birth, marriage 24
Obituaries 25

Kevin's Korner 27
Knowing God firsthand



Sierra Leone: Churches growing along with challenges

by Kirk Looper



Sierra Leone is located in North-west Africa on the coast bordering Guinea and Liberia. It is a small country, but the SDB Conference there has a big desire to develop local Seventh Day Baptist churches.

Isaac Kposowa is the General Secretary of their Conference, which has been registered and recognized by the government since 2001.

Kwabena Opuku, a resident of The Gambia, helped organize the SDB groups in Sierra Leone. They

now have five churches—two of them located in the capital city of Freetown, one on the outskirts of town, and the other two in the provinces. Each of these churches is asso-

ciated with or is planning a school that will be run by SDBs. These will begin at the nursery and primary levels, and then expand to the upper grades as funding and time allows.

Seventh Day Baptists are reaching out in Sierra Leone by running schools, like this one in Freetown.



Government officials recently visited the churches. They told the Conference that because it has been a longtime registered mission, it now needs a permanent office. The cost of this project—land, building, and equipment—is \$45,000.

Many challenges face the five pastors of these Sabbathkeeping churches, including the need for administrative offices and equipment—a computer, printer, and other communication tools. They need these items to help with the work in their own country as well as in other areas of Africa. With these supplies, they could truly become an international office.

All of these SDB pastors are unpaid volunteers. They are unable to commit to the work full-time because they have to search for jobs elsewhere to meet their own financial obligations. As a result, most workers cannot go where ministry is needed most. If we help support these men, they'll be able to spend more time doing the Lord's work.

The SDB congregations in Sierra Leone and their member-

Government officials recently visited the churches in Sierra Leone. They told the Conference that because it has been a longtime registered mission, it now needs a permanent office.

ship are: Freetown, 65; Mousavie, 60; Mongrewo, 40; Hill Station, 30; and Lakka, 15. Pastors report that they are very busy and face many challenges. These include the physical needs of members who have only recently settled in their regions.

Another area of concern is malnutrition and the poor financial condition of their church members. Many face a variety of medical problems. Church leaders are unable to respond to these overwhelming needs and are looking for help from outside their Conference.

The basic needs in Sierra Leone are similar to those of other Conferences. They request Bibles, study materials, Communion supplies, hymnals, bicycles, and school items.

Please pray that the work in Sierra Leone will move forward, reaching out to the unsaved and to those greatly in need of a supportive family. **SR**

*SDB Missionary Society
119 Main St.
Westerly RI 02891
sdbmissoc@verizon.net*



The basic needs in Sierra Leone are similar to those of other Conferences. They request Bibles, study materials, Communion supplies, hymnals, bicycles, and school items.

Some of the church members (and future members) gather at the Mousavie SDB church in Sierra Leone.



Striving to meet needs in Malawi

Healthcare and education top priorities

by Kirk Looper

Schools and clinics

Last September, I had the opportunity to visit Malawi, Africa. While there, Mr. Matala, the elementary schools principal, gave me a tour of the grounds. He explained that they have seven primary

mindings us that the wages have to be “sweetened” to keep the trained people there. They would easily earn more at other clinics or hospitals. Many of the nurses have left Malawi to work in other countries, especially those to the north, and in South

The orphan situation

The number of orphans that the Conference and area churches help to support is tremendous. I was astounded by the abundance of orphans in the immediate area around Makapwa, estimated at close to 5,000. It is difficult to imagine that many children without parents!

Many of these orphans are without housing. The churches provide food and clothing, and would like to get them into schools, but the numbers remain overwhelming. Many of these children have lost parents to diseases such as cholera, malaria, and HIV/AIDS. The hospitals and clinics are currently concentrating on two areas: health education and home-based care.

Many of the nurses have left Malawi to work in other countries. This exodus has caused a dramatic shortage of nurses in Malawi.

schools, one secondary school, and one vocational school. The Bible College is also located on the Makapwa Seventh Day Baptist compound.

The schools at Makapwa have hired 12 primary school teachers and four secondary school teachers. They are paid \$50 a month and are housed on the compound near the school. Housing is also provided for the medical administrator, treasurer, medical personnel, and the groundskeeper.

A physician’s assistant, lab technician, pharmacist, and two nurses make up the basic medical personnel. They are paid \$50 to \$100 per month. (The government has donated one nurse. She is paid by the government and makes less than the nurse from Makapwa.)

When we spoke of medical field wages, the administrator kept re-

Africa. This exodus has caused a dramatic shortage of nurses in Malawi.

Medicine needed

The tour through the hospital complex revealed that the loss of almost \$2,000 to theft has really hurt their program. Medical supplies and medicines are drastically low.

The Makapwa Station coordinates the medicine for four other clinics. It would be great if we could raise \$2,000 to replenish their drugs and supplies.

Another reason for the lack of medicine is that most families in that section of Malawi are very poor and cannot afford to pay the total cost. So medications are sold at a reduced price. After a while, this loss of income catches up with the dwindling supply of medicines, and they do not have enough money to purchase replacement drugs and supplies.

Health Education

The Health Education program instructs people about body care and preventative measures to decrease infections. Classes are held at clinics and hospitals, but they are also taught in local neighborhoods. This way, those who are unable to travel to the clinics can also benefit from the training.

The effectiveness of this program is determined by how well they can get people to attend the classes. They teach hygiene associated with a person’s own body, and how to improve cleanliness among those with whom they live and associate. Basic health issues include boiling drinking water, cooking foods thoroughly, washing dishes in boiling water,

keeping spills and crumbs cleaned up, etc.

Learning how to identify food that may carry infectious agents is vitally important to a family's health. The instructors also touch on the medicines that are available for certain ailments and tell how to properly use them. Many of the things that they stress are taken for granted in most areas of North America.

Home-Based Care

The Home-Based Care program does exactly what the name implies: it brings trained personnel into homes to care for those who are bedridden or have a condition that prevents them from traveling to a hospital or clinic. This allows parents and children to remain at home where they receive personal attention from their families.

Trained personnel give care instructions and demonstrate nursing skills. This alleviates some of the extra responsibilities of clinic and hospital nurses, and allows them to concentrate on patients with more serious medical issues.

Both of these programs need a lot of financial assistance. Often, the

The Home-Based Care program brings trained personnel into homes to care for those who are bedridden or have a condition that prevents them from traveling.

traveling programs are "grounded" because they don't have the funds to buy fuel, medical supplies, and equipment, and they lack the money to take care of the personal needs of trained personnel. Please search your heart and pray that funds will become available to assist these programs.

Storms, repairs

All the clinics in Malawi run by the Central Africa Conference (CAC) are struggling. Makapwa was hit by a windstorm in 2004 that left the hospital without adequate shelter and electricity. Roofs were blown

off several buildings, and solar panels were destroyed.

Agencies and individuals in the U.S. sent large sums of money to help with the repairs. Presently, they have replaced the roofs and other damaged portions of the buildings, including many of the solar panels.

Several panels remain missing, and it will cost \$50 each to replace them. These control lighting in the dorms and waiting facilities, and need to be replaced so that night-time visits by medical personnel are more effective.

Desire for government recognition

We can help the work throughout Malawi by regularly donating to their projects. This will enable them to keep the work going in their clinics and schools. They greatly desire to become recognized as a "government hospital," even though it will cost over \$20,000. However, this will guarantee better relationships with the government and help get needed doctors and nurses back to the area.

The government will partially support this project. Contributions toward this end would be well spent.

While I was in Malawi, they celebrated the 105 years that the CAC has influenced the work in that country. It was a tremendous time, and everyone attending was richly blessed.

The celebration occurred on the last Sunday of their Conference and was attended by hundreds of members and guests, including former missionary David Pearson, and Joe and Joyce Samuels. It lasted all day, and I believe that *everyone* was ready for bed that night!

We praise God that it was a safe and healthy meeting, and an informative mission trip. **SR**



Many solar panels like these were damaged by a windstorm. They run the pump for the water source.



Visibility matters

by Ron Elston

As I travel across the country, I encounter many different churches—large, small, urban, and rural. With all of them, I see an interesting variety of church signs.

Some have signs that are highly visible and professional looking. These are easy to read and provide a wealth of information, such as times of services, names of pastors, pertinent phone numbers, etc.

However, I have also witnessed cardboard or paper church signs nailed to trees and fences. What message does this communicate?

In Church Planters Basic Training School, we ask, “What do visual images such as logos, signs, and facilities do?”

They communicate a message about the church’s values, attitudes, and morale. The design of a church sign must communicate a message

that represents the mindset of that particular congregation. That’s why we suggest erecting “professional” signs.

Last year, the Outreach Bible Church of Portage, Wis., requested project funding from the SDB Missionary Society. This included money for a new sign that would increase their visibility in the community. The request was granted.

Following General Conference this past summer, my family and I attended services at Portage and were blessed to see their new sign. We commend their outreach efforts and are thankful that they



Visual images communicate a message about the church’s values, attitudes, and morale.

are a positive witness for the Christian community in general, and for Seventh Day Baptists in particular. **SR**

Fall revival at Faith

by Ron Elston

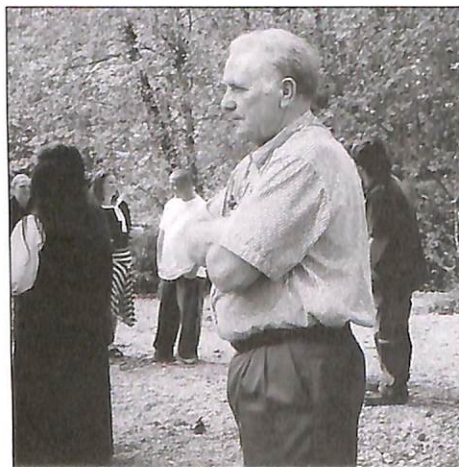


Tom Harp, pastor of the Calvary Covenant Church (SDB) in Memphis, Tenn., conducted a series of evangelistic messages during a weekend revival at the Faith Seventh Day Baptist Church in Doniphan, Mo.

The special meetings were held the first part of October, 2004. A popular Southern Gospel group, “The Bob Lewis Family”—which entertains regularly in Branson, Mo.—provided special music.

Following the Sabbath message and fellowship dinner, Faith’s new pastor, Rev. Dennis Staggs, and Rev. Ronald Elston conducted three baptisms in the rather cool waters of the Black River.

God is truly moving at Faith in a special way! (See more on page 10.) **SR**



Top left: The Bob Lewis Family shared special music. Bottom left: Pastors Dennis Staggs and Ron Elston baptize a new believer. Left: Pastor Tom Harp awaits the next baptism.

Good visit in Yakima

by Ron Elston

While visiting Seventh Day Baptist churches and other contacts in the Pacific Northwest, I had the pleasure of speaking and fellowshiping with Pastor Stan Fox and his fellow church members in Yakima, Wash.



The meeting house of the Ahtanum Community Church in Yakima, Wash.

The Ahtanum Community Church is a Sabbathkeeping church in Yakima. Pastor Stan and Gladys had invited me to speak to their congregation, which I did in September of last year. I had a great time sharing with them.

Pastor Fox has supported various mission projects through the SDB Missionary Society, and invites anyone traveling through the area to visit and worship with them.

In addition to the Ahtanum



Pastor Stan and Gladys Fox.

church, Pastor Stan works with the new church plant in Grandview, Wash., and with the Columbia group led by Marty Jackson. **SR**

North Loup sponsors new work in Lincoln

by Ron Elston

In September 2004, I met with a group interested in establishing a Seventh Day Baptist work in the Lincoln, Neb., area.

Prior to the Church Planters School held in May at the SDB Center in Janesville, Wis., our national office learned that several families—most from the North Loup, Neb., area—had moved to Lincoln for employment. I proceeded to make several contacts, and then was invited to meet with those individuals as well as with leaders from the North Loup SDB Church.

The meeting was well attended, with five families representing the local area. Pastor Chris Mattison and Jim Goodrich came from the North Loup church.

We are so excited about this new group, and are thrilled that the North Loup church is assisting them.

We held a good discussion, and the leadership from North Loup expressed excitement about sponsoring this new work. Those with various spiritual gifts agreed to fill roles involving teaching and music.

The Lincoln group held their first meeting on Sabbath, September 18,

at the Jody Looper home in Lincoln. Since then, the group has continued to meet and develop. The SDB Missionary Society has supplied the denomination's *Manual of Procedures*, and other books and tracts, while the North Loup church has purchased *The Helping Hand* for study.

Presently, they are seeking a new meeting place. We are so excited about this new group, and are thrilled that the North Loup church is assisting them.

We look to God for His blessings on this new work for His Kingdom. The Missionary Society will continue to work with both groups as needed. **SR**



New pastor at Faith SDB

Rev. Dennis J. Staggs was installed as pastor of the Faith Seventh Day Baptist Church in Doniphan, Mo., on October 2, 2004, following the resignation of Rev. Ronald J. Elston.

Staggs is an ordained General Baptist minister and has served in church growth and pastoral ministry.

Pastor Ron, who serves as denominational National Extension Minister, stated that his decision to step down as pastor of the Faith church was “due to very positive blessings from God.”

“The work of the National Field USA/Canada continues to expand, with new ‘planting’ groups and interested individuals cropping up across the country. Because of the demands of increased travel and training, I felt I was no longer able to balance pastoral duties with Extension efforts.

“The Lord provided the right leadership at the right time,” he added.

Prior to joining Faith, Pastor Den-

nis and his wife Jackie (daughter of Ron and Bonnie Elston) served as Ministers of Music at the church for several years. They were also instrumental in forming the contemporary Gospel group, “The Joyful Noise.”

Pastor Dennis resigned as Field Manager for the Boycom Cable Co., prior to assuming full-time pastoral duties at Faith. He and his wife have two children—Sarah, 10, and a grown son, Wesley—and one grandson.

When completed, the new Faith Activities Center will house a gym, fellowship area, kitchen, offices, and training classrooms.

Their repertoire includes several original Gospel songs, and they minister to churches and Associations throughout the Southwest.

The Faith church continues to grow, leading them to expand their facilities. When completed, the new Faith Activities Center will house a gym, fellowship area, kitchen, offices, and training classrooms.

Pastor Elston and his wife Bonnie started the Faith church in February of 1984. During the 20 years of their ministry, many lives have been touched for the Lord.

The Faith “mother church” has two branch churches now and continues to reach out into the community. Faith SDB is a member of the Southwestern Association. **SR**

Presenting His Word in Grandview

by Ron Elston

A new work has started in the lower Yakima Valley under the lead-



Pastor Tom Bales leads a new group in Grandview, Wash.

ership of Thomas and Barbara Bales. The new “plant” is located in Grandview, Wash., between Yakima and Kennewick.

Pastor Bales is a graduate of Seattle Bible College and served as pastor of the Bethel Community Church in Sunnyside, Wash.

Pastor Tom helped organize the Uganda Christian Outreach Ministry in 1987, which has now grown to nine churches, several orphanages and schools, and a Bible college. Brother Bales has also served in missions in Romania, teaching leadership classes and doing other work related to ministry.

The new group in Grandview is called His Word SDB. Pastor Bales has developed a good working relationship with area pastors and is being mentored by Pastor Ken Burdick of the Seattle Area SDB Church in Auburn, Wash.

Their first service was held in September 2004, following my visit as National Extension Minister for the SDB Missionary Society.

The group is growing and reaching out into the community with the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus. Praise God for new leadership with a desire for outreach and growth. **SR**

Exploring the Sabbath

by Linda Greene

Our journey through all the Old Testament references to the Sabbath continues.

Leviticus 26:34-35

While the Hebrews were in captivity, the land lay desolate—"destroyed, stupefied, stunned, amazed, wondering what happened." It thus enjoyed the Sabbath rest it had missed, including all of its Sabbaths and the rest it was supposed to have had.

Why would God care if the land rested?

To be healthy, land needs to lie fallow and rest. But God's purpose in restoring all the "lost rest" for this land had to be for us, to show us something.

God's purpose for Creation will be accomplished no matter how far off track our world gets. He is sovereign, and His Kingdom will come to this earth. His plan will come to pass, no matter what. The only question is, "Will I be a part of it?"

Will I enter into that Sabbath rest He promises to His people? Will I enter into His plan and purpose for my life? I'm the only part of Creation that has a choice, but my freedom of choice will not alter God's purpose or plan for this world—it can only affect my role in that plan.

Numbers 28:9-10

I love the concept of Sabbath offerings in this Scripture.

Sabbath is a time of special offerings to the Lord, over and above our usual daily offerings. It's about giving to God, but it is also about giving to others. When we include others in our giving, God says that we have "done it unto Him."

Are my Sabbath traditions an offering to God *and* to others? Or are they selfish and self-focused? I am set free on Sabbath from all the burdens and constraints of this world,

but I'm not free to be selfish and self-focused.

Deuteronomy 5:12-15 (The Fourth Commandment)

In addition to resting on the Sabbath, here the Israelites are told to remember that God delivered them from slavery in Egypt.

We should make the Sabbath a time to remember that God delivered *us* from the bondage of sin through Jesus Christ. We must remember our salvation because God keeps telling us to remember it!

Sabbath is also a reminder of God's redemption. He knew from the time of Creation that we would be prone to forget that. This is definitely a recurring theme when it comes to the Sabbath's purpose in our lives.

1 Chronicles 9:32

A little thing here—they made new bread every Sabbath to put in the holy place on the table by the altar, giving us another picture of Christ, the Living Bread. We are refreshed every Sabbath as we speak to each other about him, and we refresh and renew ourselves every Sabbath in his presence.

Psalms 92

This psalm is introduced as "A song for Sabbath." It rejoices in the works of God's hands and in His triumph over His enemies, and it was to be sung at the morning sacrifice -on Sabbath Day. So, on Sabbath, we are to rejoice in God's victory over our enemies. We are to celebrate our salvation, which is what the Sabbath has represented for us from the very beginning.

Isaiah 1:13

The Lord hates our Sabbathkeeping if it is meaningless or if our in-

tents and actions are evil in purpose. That is the ultimate desecration of God's Sabbath. Our Sabbathkeeping can be a burden to God, too, not just to us (v. 14).

It was not what the Children of Israel were doing on Sabbath that was the problem, it was the rest of the week—how they treated and cared for others.


How we live our lives from moment to moment is much more important to God than how we keep the Sabbath. We must never forget that.

Does this mean that keeping the Sabbath isn't important to God? No! But if we keep Sabbath perfectly, and then live lives that are completely out of step with His nature and purposes the rest of the week, God would rather have us not bother at all.

Isaiah 56:2-7

To desecrate means, "To divert from a holy purpose or use, to misuse, or make vulgar and unclean."

This Scripture promises that those who do not desecrate the Sabbath (among other commands also given here) will be blessed and given a memorial and an everlasting name. God will bring them to His holy mountain, give them joy in His house of prayer, and accept their offerings and sacrifices. This invitation was promised to all—including eunuchs and foreigners.

These verses provide another picture that Sabbath (and salvation) is offered to everyone—no favorites. Sabbath here represents total obedience to God, and is a sign and reminder of His covenant with the Children of Israel. God also promises us all the blessings of His covenant, and the Sabbath is a reminder of this. 



Important correspondence

Greetings *SR* Readers,

2004 was an interesting year, presenting me with many challenges and blessings. I extend my gratitude to Kevin Butler for his graciousness, and I also extend to him my apologies for my own shortcomings. It is time for me to step down as editor of the *SR* Women's Page.

Before I take my leave, I wish to share a couple of important letters that I received during the past 12 months.

Our very own SDB sisters and brothers in West and East Africa have written to request personal assistance from us—life-support aid that they may be better equipped and enabled to take care of themselves. It is critical that we help each other with physical as well as spiritual needs. By joining together, the Good News of Christ will continue to spread and grow throughout the world.

Dear Laura,

It is my greatest pleasure to communicate to you after reading the Women's Society's page from the *SR* of September 2001.

I am from the Sierra Leone SDB headquarter church. My name is Diligent Kposowa, and I am the Women's lead. This is my own response to the persecution that many face around the world, especially African countries that the war affected like in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Somalia, etc. What I will suggest is that the NABWU should embark on a Post-War Recoveries Project.

This will help greatly in spread-

ing the Good News of Christ. In Africa, women suffered immensely during the war. But because of poverty (a major challenge in Africa), some of the women are widows, with children without accommodation, no education, no food. I have travelled to some

our warm greetings to you in the name of our Almighty Father. I am so much happy to receive your e-mail address from the *Sabbath Recorder* of March this year.

I am the coordinator of East Africa SDB Missionary Society.

It is critical that we help each other with physical as well as spiritual needs. By joining together, the Good News of Christ will continue to spread and grow throughout the world.

African states where these women suffer greatly.

I hope that we will continue to communicate. I would like our country to be member of NABWU. Please send me the "Tie That Binds," which you publish twice every year so that I will have knowledge about the project.

My postal address is:

Seventh Day Baptist Conference
Sierra Leone (LTD)
8 Beckly Lane
Tengben Town, Freetown,
Sierra Leone, West Africa.

Thanks. May God bless you and your ministry.

Yours in Christ,
Celilia D. Kposawu

Dear Sister Laura Price,
I take this opportunity to pass

My post office box is 1884, Kisii. I hereby please request you as a brother in Christ working with you in one ministry.

We have almost five women's groups who are really working hard in promoting the ministry here. As a leader, I see and request that if possible please, if they can be supported in any way possible—e.g., simple sewing machines, material, and supplies. The women suggest that we could make handicraft projects to sell in our marketplaces here. They could promote them to start even a simple business project here.

This is our humble request. For more information, please inquire from our beloved Director in His service Kirk Looper.

Your brother in Christ,
Pastor Benard Nyakebere Mose

"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works?"

"Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?"

"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without

thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works"(James 2:14-18).

With God's help, may we allow Christ to work in each of us to do what we can to assist each other in dealing with the tribulations we face in this world. Are we not called upon to be faithful workers?

To help support our African brothers and sisters in Christ, please contact Kirk Looper for further information on how

you or your church can help:
G. Kirk Looper, Executive Director
SDB Missionary Society
119 Main St.
Westerly, RI 02891

Phone: (401) 596-4326
Fax: (401) 348-9494
E-mail: sdbmissoc@verizon.net

You may also contact me if you wish:
Laura Price
539 SR 100
Palatka, FL 32177
Theeliza94@mac.com 

Notice to SDB Churches and Individuals from the Women's Society



Due to the generous offer made recently by the Memorial Board, you have an opportunity to help the SDB Women's Society even more. During January and February 2005, our Memorial Board will match your donation.

If you usually donate to SCSC, the Love Gift, or other women's ministries later in the year, please consider sending your check earlier. Utilizing this grant offer is a wonderful opportunity to double your money and be of greater assistance in support of our projects.

Be sure to " earmark " your contribution. The Women's Board supports many projects, including Women's Board expenses, SCSC, Robe of Achievement, Love Gift, Tuition Fund, Women's Resource and Support, and Day of Prayer.

Please make your check out to the SDB Women's Board and mail to either Morgan Shepard, Financial Director, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547; or Enid Nobles, Women's Board Treasurer, 9 Little Pond Trail, Ormond Beach, FL 32174.



**THANK
YOU!**

**THANK
YOU!**





Pearls from the Past by Don A. Sanford, historian

A 385-year-old covenant

In 1620, a group of Separatists from the Church of England landed on the shores of what is now known as Massachusetts. One of their first acts as colonists was signing a covenant known as the Mayflower Compact.

Nearly all of the governments in Europe were hierarchical, composed of persons of social, economic, or political class. When the Pilgrims left the “Old Country,” their pastor, John Robinson, wrote the following in his farewell letter to the departing sojourners:

“Whereas you are become a civil body politick, using amongst your selves civil governments, and not furnished with any persons of spetiall eminence above the rest, to be chosen by you into office of government, let your wisdom and godliness appear, not only in chusing such persons as do entirely love and will promote the commone good, but also in yielding unto them all due honour and obedience in their lawfull administrations.”¹

Even before they set foot on their new homeland, 21 men signed a covenant representing families that had previously left the domination of the Church of England and were in danger of being absorbed into the Reformed churches and customs of Holland.

However, their separation at that time was not a political separation from their English roots. They still felt loyalty to England. It was a *cov-*

enant based upon a commonality of purpose and answered the question, “Why?” It was *not* a Constitution that answered the question, “How?” As one reads the Mayflower Compact, it should be from the perspective of the underlying reason:

In the Name of God, Amen. We whose Names are under-written, the Loyal Subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King James, by the grace of God of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith etc. Having un-

sion and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our Names at Cape Cod, the eleventh of November, in the Reign of our Sovereign Lord King James of England, France, and Ireland the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty fourth: Anno Dom, 1620.²

A little over a century and a half later, the inheritors of that first covenant felt compelled to again enter into a covenant signed in 1776. Lutz

**Even before
they set foot on their
new homeland, 21 men signed
a covenant representing families that
had previously left the domination
of the Church of England.**

dertaken for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian Faith, and the Honour of our King and Countrey, a voyage to plant the first Colony in the Northern parts of *Virginia*; Do by these Presents solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God and one another, Covenant and Combine our selves together into a Civil Body Politick, for our better ordering and preservation, and furtherance of the ends aforesaid: and by virtue hereof do enact, constitute and frame such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions and Officers, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony; unto which we promise all due submis-

and Warren—in their chapter entitled, “*The Religious Justification for Independence*”—state that “Although generally considered a secular document, the Declaration of Independence appealed ‘to the Supreme Judge of the World for the Rectitude of our intentions.’ Like the covenanted people of the seventeenth century, the signers called upon God to act as a witness to their commitment to one another.”³

This Declaration is in the form of a covenant, for it sets forth a divine purpose based upon the “Laws of Nature and Nature’s God.” It affirms that “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalien-

able Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.”

The question of how that government is formed was accomplished in the later Constitution signed in 1789.

Unfortunately, for a growing number of citizens, the covenantal aspect of our basic 21st century philosophy is being replaced by the philosophy of hedonism. Webster defines hedonism as: “The doctrine that pleasure is the sole or chief good in life and that moral duty is fulfilled in the gratification of pleasure-seeking instincts and dispositions.”

Thus we see increased efforts to depart from the covenantal aspect, such as in the attempts to eliminate the words “under God” from the Pledge of Allegiance, or to remove the motto, “In God We Trust,” from our currency.

Public relief funds have sometimes been withheld from the Salvation Army’s humanitarian efforts because prayer is offered at their soup kitchen. Lawsuits have been brought against the Boy Scouts because their oath and Scout laws presuppose the existence of God or a “higher power.”

The secularization of public schools has often gone beyond tol-

The covenantal aspect of our basic 21st century philosophy is being replaced by the philosophy of hedonism.

eration of different philosophies to prohibition, and sometimes even antagonism, of religious content.

Yet, all is not hopeless. As in physics, for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.

A few years ago, a neighboring high school senior class was told that no invocation or benediction would be given, and that students were not to include religious references in their speeches. However, at a given spot in the valedictorian’s speech, a signal was given and she sneezed. The entire senior class responded, “God Bless You!”

About a year ago, Charles Colson wrote an article for *Christianity Today* entitled, “The Postmodern

Crackup.” His premise was that “People are beginning to realize postmodern presuppositions simply don’t work.”

He also stated that, “Just as there seem to be encouraging signs in the culture, there are also signs that the church is dumbing down, moving from a Word-driven message to an image and emotion-driven message. It would be the supreme irony—and a terrible tragedy—if we found ourselves slipping into postmodernity just when the broader culture has figured out it’s a dead end.”⁴ **SR**

¹Donald Lutz and Jack Warren, “A Covenanted People: The Religious Tradition and the Origins of American Constitutionalism.” (*The John Carter Library: Providence, RI, 1987*), p. 11.

²*The Mayflower Compact in Nathaniel Morton, New England Memorial, Cambridge, Mass., 1669, quoted in Lutz and Warren, “A Covenanted People,” p. 10.*

³Lutz and Warren *op. cit.*, p. 17.

⁴Charles Colson, “The Postmodern Crackup.” (*Christianity Today, Dec. 2003*), p. 72.

Give to those who gave so much.

PASTORS:

Leroy C. Bass C. Rex Burdick David S. Clarke John A. Courod
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 Trevor 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
Janita Zwickel

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!

PROP gets help

The SDB Memorial Fund trustees voted to provide **PROP** (the Pastors Retirement Offering Project) a generous grant of \$50,000.

Plus, the fund will match the next \$50,000 donated to support our retired pastors and denominational workers. There is **NO TIME LIMIT** on this matching program.

Please send your gift to:

PROP
Seventh Day Baptist Center
PO Box 1678
Janesville WI 53547-1678



Forward thinking

The Community Center of the Hebron, Pa., Seventh Day Baptist Church is a useful building. The first floor has a dining room and kitchen, while the second floor has a large room that the church has put to many good purposes.

The building sits at the base of the hill upon which the meeting house was built and has quite a bit of open space around it—space that lets children play games like freeze-tag and dodge ball.

We talked about what the Board is doing well, what the Board needs to do better, and what the Board needs to stop doing.

I've been in the building half a dozen times in the last few years and never noticed the shiny, white wall that lines one side of the dining room.

The wall is wonderful! It is like a dry-erase board—a *big* dry-erase board, with plenty of space for words, diagrams, drawings, and other marks that symbolize thinking. The wall makes the room a wonderful location for a meeting when your group is planning to take a step back from the quarter-to-quarter activities of life to evaluate what you are doing, where you are heading, and what needs to be done to get there.

That kind of thinking is what the directors of the Board of Christian Education were doing when they gathered in the first floor room of Hebron's community center as the setting sun marked the end of the Sabbath.

Through five hours that night and five hours the next day—as we prayed together, thought, and talked—the dry-erase wall was filled and erased many times. We reflected on what we had heard and seen at General Conference and in local churches. We talked about what the Board is doing well, what the Board needs to do better, and what the Board needs to stop doing.

This page, over the next few months, will provide more information about some of the things we discussed.

In addition to the directors' special session, the Board had its Annual Corporation meeting and semi-annual directors' meeting. Here are some highlights from those meetings:

Nurture Series

After reviewing the report of a committee appointed to review the current Nurture Series, the Board concluded that the current Nurture Series does need to be revised. There is no cost

estimate yet because several choices have to be made about format and publishing methods.

General Editor of the *Helping Hand*

In order to allow the Executive Director time to focus on other tasks and visit more churches, the Board has re-established an editor's position and authorized the Sabbath School Committee to fill it.

PayPal

The Board has created a PayPal account for accepting donations online.

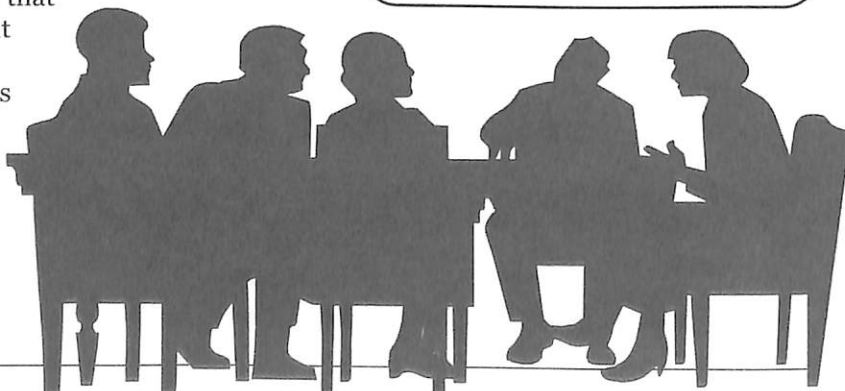
Officers

Officers were elected for the 2005 calendar year:

- Mae Bottoms* — President
- Evelyn Hauber* — Vice-President
- Allen Hauber* — Treasurer
- Amanda Snyder* — Secretary *SR*

Gifts to the Board of Christian Education support things like:

- *Sabbath Visitor* \$2,600
- Children's Conference \$3,600
- Pre-Con and Year-End Retreat (subsidy beyond fees) \$2,500





Gospel spread in Argentina

by Kirk Looper

“Priority: We Preach Christ and Christ Crucified.”

Statements this obvious never cease to amaze me. I believe that every church should have this as their number one priority. But apparently, not every church preaches the Gospel of God; otherwise, we wouldn't need to declare this to others.

SDB churches need to stand out in this area and be known as “Bible-believing and preaching” churches. Our churches in Argentina fit this description.

Pastor José Alegre is conservative in his beliefs and lifestyle, and is eager for the Church to promote a firm belief in God and acceptance of Jesus Christ as personal savior. He has been teaching this for over 10 years in Argentina and continues to do so with the same gusto as when he started.

Pastor Alegre reminisced about his calling in a recent letter he sent to the Missionary Society office:

“In 1992, I traveled to Argentina for family reasons. During that time, I was the church pastor in Melbourne, Australia.

“In Argentina, I met some Christians who asked me to conduct Bible studies. They became very interested in Seventh Day Baptist doctrines. This group consisted of 18 adults and eight children.

“I was in Argentina for six months. Upon returning to Australia, I shared my experiences with my congregation. They were very supportive, and our family began praying for the work there.

“In 1994, I went back to Argentina to start a Seventh Day Baptist work. In the beginning, it was difficult because some of the previous contacts had moved on. However, the Lord sustained us through the prayers and support of brethren in different parts of the world.

“By God's grace, the church in the village of Moron officially began meeting in October 1996. From there, it spread to other parts of Argentina. We can actually say, ‘So far the Lord has been with us.’”

The Alegres deeply appreciate all the brethren who

have been praying for this work. In addition to Moron, there are churches in Los Pinos, inside the town of Jujuy, and in the rural area around Jujuy in the San Jorge area. These four meeting places are a result of God's blessings and a burning desire for His work to spread throughout South America.

Presently, Seventh Day Baptists are spreading the Gospel through radio programs, publications, evangelistic services, and weekly Bible studies and worship services. These activities help motivate individuals to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, and lead to lifestyle changes that help them to meet God's wishes for them.

Pastor Alegre's plan to return to Australia is potentially problematic. He's looking forward to being with his family again and has trained leaders to take over when he leaves. But there is concern that these leaders will be unable to collect enough funds to continue the ministry.

Pastor Alegre continues to search for people in the United

States, Australia, and other countries who will donate funds on a monthly basis to sustain the work in Argentina. (About \$300 is needed each month, with our Argentine churches contributing about \$175 of this amount.)

Along with regular budgetary needs, each of three new SDB congregations are trying to raise money to build new churches or repair old ones. The country's economy is very sluggish right now, so it's difficult for these brethren to pay their own bills as well as Conference expenses.

As SDBs expand toward the northern part of Argentina, they hope to distribute tracts and other materials, enabling them to bring others into the fold. They want their fellow countrymen to develop a stronger relationship with God through study and worship.

We pray that God will protect all of His workers in Argentina as they seek to spread the Gospel and promote the Sabbath. **SR**

***Seventh Day Baptists
are spreading the
Gospel in Argentina through
radio programs,
publications, evangelistic
services, and weekly
Bible studies
and worship
services.***



the BEACON

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

January 2005

When you've reached that certain point

by Becky Patterson, Shiloh, N.J.

As a teenager, I feel that my gradual introduction into the "real world" is overwhelmingly stressful and full of anxiety at times.

School, work, the college-selection process, and concern for the cloudy future that lies ahead all make my life difficult to control. But there are easy and effective ways we can "de-stress" our lives and "get a handle" on them.

Step One

When was the last time you were truly stressed out? Do you remember how it felt?

Some may see stress as a huge snowball. As it speeds toward the bottom of a hill, it grows in size. This snowball becomes large because of all the little snowflakes that pack on top of each other.



Some may see stress as a huge snowball.

Others may see stress as a tidal wave—a wall of trouble that eventually smashes down upon the earth, causing widespread destruction and devastation. The resulting disaster is terrifying and unmerciful.

I don't want to be the Eskimo standing at the bottom of the hill, bowled over by a gigantic snowball, or the bronzed sun-worshipper at the beach who gets flattened into the sand.

Regardless of how you interpret stress, the most important thing to do is to literally stop and take a break. Try a few deep breaths, inhaling and exhaling through your nose. This exercise loosens your diaphragm, allowing your brain to release endorphins that reduce the tension in your body. This new, relaxed stage will help you focus on your problems better. Exercise and a healthy diet can also contribute to a calmer, better you.

Step Two

As Christians, we believe that there is no way we can achieve great things by ourselves. God is always with us, extending the strength and support we need.

Remember to surrender yourself to Christ, praying and asking him to take care of all your troubles; in fact, he even tells you to! "Cast all your

anxiety on him because he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

You'll not only feel better emotionally, experiencing serenity and peace, but you'll start to see God work in your life.

Step three

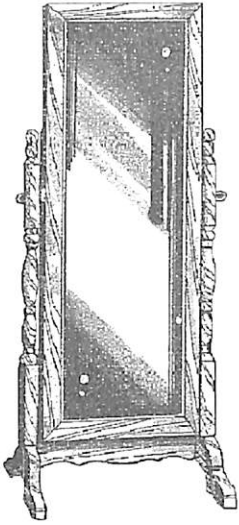
Don't worry about stress!

God continually reminds us that He is our Provider. Because of Him, we don't need to worry about the petty problems we face. He loves us and will always take care of us (Matthew 6:25-34).

Everyone needs help now and then. That's one of the reasons why God surrounds you with so many loving people. Never be afraid to ask for help. **SR**



Others may see stress as a tidal wave.



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

Redeem the time

January, 2005—the start of another year, and another notch on my belt of life (figuratively *and* literally).

It seems like only yesterday that I was cramming foodstuffs into a basement storage bin, preparing for the calamitous arrival of the year 2000. But Y2K's bark was much worse than its bite, and it came and went like a whimpering puppy.

Time is strange. The older we get, the faster it seems to go.

When we were young, time couldn't go fast enough. Remember wishing that you were 16? Remember dreaming of the day when you would turn 21 and magically mutate into an adult?

When we're older, we often wish that we could turn the clock back. *Oh, for the good old days when I could touch my toes and see without glasses!*

Upon receiving the diagnosis of Stage 3 breast cancer, time became even more precious to me. I remember planting an asparagus bed and wondering if I would be around to see the tender stalks emerge in the spring.

The day I told my son about my illness (in the fall of 1999), he shared that I was going to be a grandmother. Suddenly, my desire for "more time" grew by leaps and bounds. So did my bargaining.

"God, please let me live long enough to see my grandchildren." Then it became, "God, I would really like to see my grandchildren grow

up." Then, "It sure would be great to be at their weddings." My most recent plea? "It sure would be swell to get to know my great-grandchildren."

For one reason or another, we never seem to have enough time; we always want more. This can lead to frustration and discontentment.

When we reach this point, we need to stop and reflect on God's

For one reason or another, we never seem to have enough time; we always want more.

Word. In Ecclesiastes, Solomon often oozes negativity, but he also offers many wise words:

"There is a time to be born and a time to die" (3:2). We know that everyone will die someday, but it's a mystery when that will happen to each of us. "No man knows when his hour will come" (9:11-12). And even if we did, we can't do anything about it. "No man has power over the wind to contain it; so no one has power over the day of his death" (8:8).

Because of these truths, we need to live life each day and trust God with our futures. *"However many years a man may live, let him enjoy them all" (11:8). "I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live" (3:12).*

Time is a gift from God, and we should cherish every moment He gives us. But we shouldn't worry

about it. Jesus' sacrifice has vanquished death. As Christians, our lives actually *begin* at death. The "process" of dying is fearful, but not death itself.

When I was younger, Paul's words in Philippians puzzled me: "I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far, but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body" (1:23).

How could a person be torn between living and dying? As my faith matured, my understanding grew.

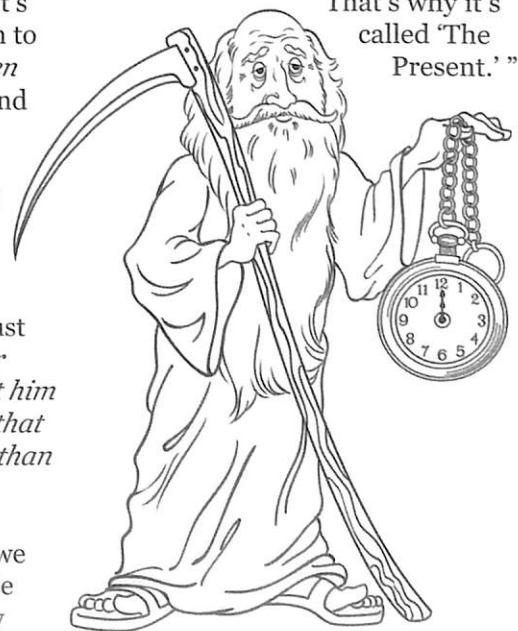
"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 1:55-57).

As we enjoy the time God has given us, remember these words:

"The past is history, the future is a mystery, today is a gift.

That's why it's called "The Present." "

SR





The President's Page
by Don Graffius

Time to take inventory

It is the beginning of a new year, and thousands of businesses across the nation are taking inventory.

Grocery store owners are counting the cans and boxes of food on their shelves, and factory personnel are counting parts and equipment. Once inventories are complete, they will prepare financial statements to determine profits or losses. Keeping track of inventory is time consuming and costly, but it is very necessary.

As individuals, we also take inventory. We may see the doctor for our yearly checkup, or our dentist every six months.

When our children were small, we had a growth chart. (We still have one for other children who visit.) Every few months, our kids would stand beside the chart, and we would mark their height and record the date. Both my wife Linda and I were taking an inventory to check on their growth.

In November of 2003, I resolved to get more exercise and started a weight-training program at a local hospital. In January, the number of people using the equipment skyrocketed. However, by March, many had given up and quit coming.

Researchers tell us that we are far more likely to keep our resolutions if we simply write them down.

I recently lost some weight. One of the keys to my success was the simple requirement that I write down every-

thing I ate. I also recorded the duration and type of exercise I undertook.

At the end of each day, I tallied up the calories I consumed, minus the ones I lost through exercise. Writing things down kept me accountable.

As we begin a new year—and perhaps during the year—we should take a spiritual inventory. We are either going forward in our spiritual lives or slipping backward. There are no parking spaces on life's highway; we are either growing and becoming more like Jesus, or we are backsliding.

People who are familiar with us generally know if we are growing. But if we look at ourselves honestly, no one knows that better than we do. In 2 Peter 3:18, we are instructed to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." This should be the inventory checklist for each Seventh Day Baptist as another year starts.

To grow physically, we need food, water, air, and exercise. Similarly, we cannot hope to grow more like Jesus unless we become involved in prayer and Bible study, and resolve to do something for someone else.

Charts and checklists can help us to systematically pray and study our Bibles. Linda keeps a daily prayer journal and has found it very encouraging.

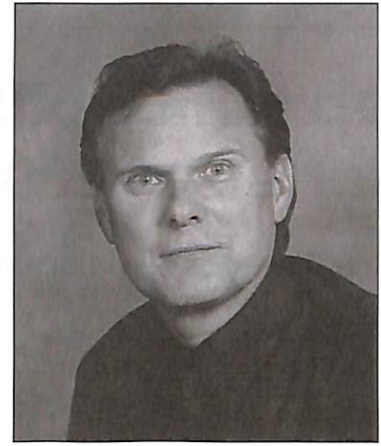
Charts and lists are not requirements "to grow in grace and knowledge" of Jesus. But they can provide a way to see the wonders of God through answered prayer. Reading and studying our Bibles is a way "to grow in the knowledge" of Jesus and his plan. Helping others will help us to put them first, while asking God, "What would you like me to do next?"

To "grow in grace," our inventory list might include these questions:

- Do I entrust myself to God?
- Do I make knowing my Heavenly Father my goal?
- Do people see me as a person who loves the Lord?
- Is my life at peace?
- Do I thank the Creator enough?
- Am I grateful?
- Do I seek the Counselor?
- Do I trust the King of kings?
- Do I know, without a doubt, that I am forgiven?
- Do I know I have God's grace without any strings attached, even without a list?

If we are to be *strong, steady, and enthusiastic for the work of the Lord*, we must periodically take inventory. Ask yourself, "Am I growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ?"

Does *your* end-of-the-year statement show a profit or a loss? **SR**



by Executive Director
Rob Appel

New Year = New Vision

In the book of Genesis, God commands that there be *light*. Light shows us direction and illuminates the path ahead of us, but only with God's vision can we see to follow.

It is as true in the physical world as it is in the spiritual world that God desires clarity and direction without confusion or indecision. We can participate with God in His Life and Kingdom only when we are tuned into His leading.

I believe that as the New Year begins, it is time for Seventh Day Baptists to turn to God and seek a New Vision in a New Light.

The future growth of SDB churches depends on how we develop and implement new ministry opportunities in order to invite new people. Each individual church will need to discover their future needs and be creative, sometimes thinking "outside the box" to meet those needs.

This is a BIG challenge but necessary for the future health and growth of local churches.

Belonging vs. participation

SDB churches are not like the mega-churches that are growing so rapidly, based on the number of church participants. May God bless those churches that specialize in bringing people from unbelief and sin to participation in the Church.

But there is more to Christian

living than accepting the Lord and spending one hour a week participating in church.

God calls His people to *belonging* and *sacrifice*. The Body of Christ is a call to unity, and to love each other. God calls His people to minister to one another and to the world around

**As the
New Year begins,
it is time for
Seventh Day Baptists
to turn to
God and seek a New
Vision in a New
Light.**

them. He calls His people to mature in their knowledge of Him, and in the way they are to live.

Seventh Day Baptists are a people who go beyond just "participation" in church. Our mission is to encourage and equip people to take the next bold steps toward Christian beliefs, maturity, and ministry.

That makes us a "Next Step" people—ones who specialize in taking others to the next step in their faith and relationship to God. Like other churches, SDBs call people

from unbelief to belief. But Seventh Day Baptists specialize in calling people to take the *next* step.

We are a "Next Step" people!

We need to be comfortable with who we are and with our role in the Kingdom of Believers. We need to understand that we are a "Next Step" people, and that we serve our Lord in a very tangible way, calling people to *belong* and not just participate in church. We need to realize that this is very important to the overall maturity of the Church and its members.

Invite, include, involve

From the beginning of time, Satan has attacked God's work, trying to rob new believers of the Almighty's blessings. Darkness has always sought to overcome Light.

The only source of Light is God. Without His presence, we would work in a state of eternal darkness, effectively blind.

Our local churches need to move beyond being friendly to being *car-ing*. We must move beyond making new people part of our Sabbath morning experience to making them part of our lives. **SR**

*Next month: Invite, Include
and Involve!*

Top ten Baptist news stories of 2004

by Greg Warner, Associated Baptist Press

The Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) withdrawal from the Baptist World Alliance was the top Baptist news story of 2004, according to a survey of journalists.

The murder of four SBC missionaries in Iraq was the second most significant story, followed closely by President Bush's re-election with support from so-called "values voters."

Associated Baptist Press, an independent news organization based in Jacksonville, Fla., conducted the annual survey of Baptist state newspaper editors.

The Baptist World Alliance (BWA), an international umbrella organization representing 211 Baptist bodies, lost its largest member and contributor in June. The SBC's conservative leaders said BWA harbors theological liberalism, a charge denied by the Virginia-based alliance and many of its member groups worldwide. The action became official in October, costing BWA \$300,000 a year.

In the deadliest tragedy in 157 years of Southern Baptist missions history, four International Mission Board missionaries were killed in


their car on March 15 in Mosul, Iraq, by unidentified assailants wielding automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenades.

The relief workers were from North Carolina, California, and Texas.

Conservative Southern Baptists, who strongly supported George W. Bush's re-election on November 2, have since celebrated the growing influence of moral issues in American politics. They called for Bush and the Congress to push ahead with reforms to outlaw gay marriage and abortion, appoint conservative judges, and expand federal funding for faith-based charities.

The other top stories of 2004 were:

- 4. Gay marriage—particularly its approval by the Massachusetts Supreme Court, and gay marriages held in San Francisco and a couple of other municipalities—prompted a nationwide outcry from conservatives and legislative attempts to prohibit it.
- 5. Four deadly hurricanes smashed into Florida, other Southern states, and the Caribbean in late summer. They killed more than 100 people, damaged dozens of churches, and triggered Baptist disaster relief work.
- 6. Mel Gibson's blockbuster movie, "The Passion of the Christ," debuted in February amid charges of anti-Semitism, but pre-Easter audiences responded favorably, producing record ticket and DVD sales. While the movie made Jesus' death a topic of water cooler conversation, evangelical Christians turned the box office phenomenon into an outreach tool.
- 7. Constitutional amendments banning gay marriage were passed in 11 states on November 2 in reaction to legalization in some jurisdictions. Two other states approved bans earlier.
- 8. The SBC International Mission Board adopted guidelines in July requiring volunteer mission workers to endorse the more conservative 2000 version of the "Baptist Faith and Message" statement. The endorsement is already required of IMB missionaries.
- 9. Congress defeated the Federal Marriage Amendment on a procedural vote on July 14. The defeat of the constitutional ban was hailed as a victory by gay-rights activists, but the vote triggered a cascade of state gay-marriage bans and energized a conservative electorate.
- 10. The SBC North American Mission Board voted on February 4 not to endorse female chaplains in cases "where the role and function of the chaplain would be seen the same as that of a pastor." The move brought an end to the SBC's endorsement of female chaplains for the military, but may not prevent women from serving as hospital chaplains.

Other stories ranking high in the minds of Baptist editors were: a study showing the number of "declining" Southern Baptist churches on the rise, the worldwide reaction to the election of a gay Episcopal bishop in New Hampshire, and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary's fight against making the SBC the "sole member" of its corporation, ensuring trustees could not break away from the SBC. 

Daily Paper Survey

A separate survey of religion writers at the country's daily newspapers produced a tie for the number one news story of the year.

At the top of the poll by Religion News Service were "The Passion of the Christ" and the role of faith in Bush's re-election. (ABP)

Holland to host us again

by Judy Parrish

It's time to start making plans to come to the Great Lake State—Michigan—for General Conference, August 7-13, 2005.

Beautiful Holland, a Dutch city on the shores of Lake Michigan, will be our Conference site, using the spacious facilities of Hope College. Hope is a private college affiliated with the Reformed Church in America and was the location of our last Michigan Conference in 1999.

A great team from the White Cloud, Grand Rapids, and Battle Creek, Mich., churches has been assembled, with Rev. Bernie Wethington as chairman. (Church office phone number is 231-689-1787). The Host Committee will plan for our every need and will be there to assist us through any contingency that arises.

There will be programs and activities for all ages, once again making Conference a wonderful “family week” for everyone.

Housing availability will range from standard dorm rooms to air-conditioned dorm rooms with semi-private bath, plus apartments and the College Conference Center hotel rooms. Off-campus Hol-

land has several lovely Bed and Breakfast facilities. Details will be covered in a later article.

Michigan has numerous attractions for enjoyable family vacations before and after Conference.

Visit the web at www.travel.michigan.org or call the Michigan Travel Bureau at (888) 784-7328. The Holland Visitors Bureau's toll-free number is (800) 506-1299.

Plan now to gather in Michigan as we are “Enthusiastic For the Lord!” **SR**



New Women's Committee

Do you know what the “Women's Resource and Support Committee” is all about?

This is a fairly new committee of the SDB Women's Society, consisting of Women's Board volunteers who coordinate women with similar interests and concerns. They have a lending library of books and videos to encourage women to develop self-skills and take on leadership roles. These resources include children videos and Sabbath

School curriculum. Those seeking the materials cover all shipping costs.

The committee plans to have a web site connection soon to help develop contacts.

We are aware of women who home school, crochet, and quilt, and are involved in health awareness, prison ministry, etc. We are challenged to combine these varied interests so that we can minister to each other more effectively.

Another way we can help women is to share books by name and au-

thor, and include a brief summation.

If you have anything to contribute to this sharing project—or if you have a need of your own—please contact:

*Linda Camenga
6147 Ridgewood Ave., #3
Port Orange, FL 32127*

You may also reach Linda by phone: (386) 761-4494.

Her e-mail address is LRVHCam@aol.com.

New members

Birth

Alfred Station, NY
Kenneth Chroniger, pastor
 Joined after baptism
 Corey Sanborn

Joined after testimony
 James Hitchcock

Bay Area, Calif.
Steven Crouch, pastor
 Joined after testimony
 Brent Hannah

Daytona Beach, FL
John Camenga, pastor
 Joined after testimony
 Richard Bond
 Susan Bond
 Paula Haas
 Everald Kelly
 Joyce Kelly

Denver, CO
Rodney Henry, pastor
 Joined by letter
 Steve Graffius

McPherson.—A daughter, Emilia Maryn McPherson, was born to Bryan and Tanya (Henry) McPherson of Thornton, CO, on November 23, 2004.

Marriage

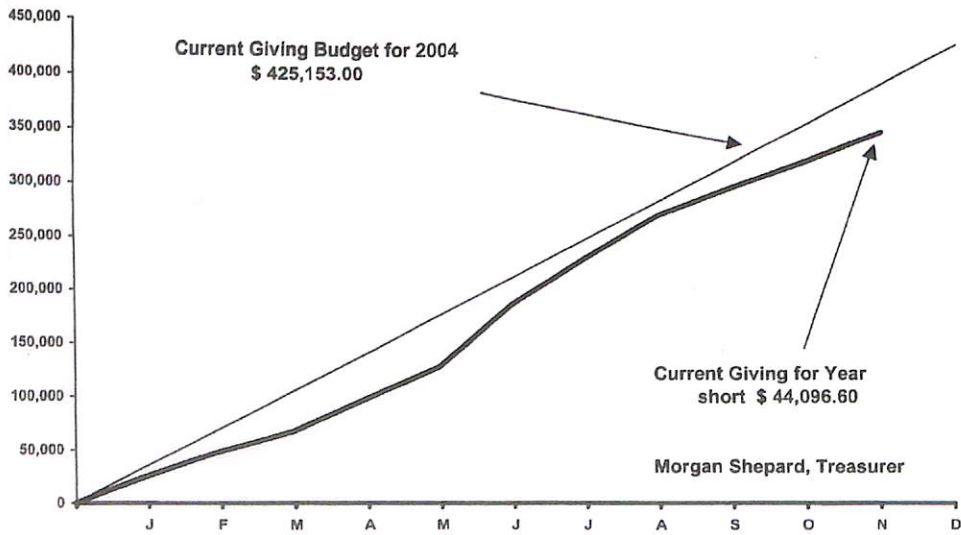
Sanborn - Butts.—Corey J. Sanborn and Susie Butts were married on July 24, 2004, in Alfred Station, NY, with Pastor Ken Chroniger officiating.

Changes at church?

Please send your updates to us at:
 Sabbath Recorder
 SDB Center
 PO Box 1678
 Janesville WI 53547

Our e-mail is:
 editor@seventhdaybaptist.org

Current Giving 2004



**Make TWICE
 the Difference**
 (or)
Double your Money!

From now through February, every gift to the Denominational Budget (designated and undesignated) will be matched by the SDB Memorial fund.

While we could not report year-end figures at press time, we are hoping for a significant increase in December giving. Thank you for helping us make twice the difference.

Please send your support today!

"Twice the Difference"
 Seventh Day Baptist Center
 PO Box 1678
 Janesville WI 53547

Obituaries

Curry.—David Leonard Curry, 75, of Fairmont, W.Va., died on September 27, 2004, in Fairmont General Hospital.

He was born on October 19, 1928, in Lost Creek, W.Va., the son of Luther Roscoe Curry and Ruth (Doddrill) Curry.

A 1947 graduate of Lost Creek High School, David was a construction supervisor for C&P Telephone. He retired in 1983 after 30 years of service.

He was a member of the Upper Mon Valley Shrine Club, the Telephone Pioneers of America, and a charter member and past president of the Whitehall Lions Club. He was also a 50-year member of the Lost Creek Seventh Day Baptist Church.

Survivors include his wife of 55 years, Helen Ruth (Davisson) Curry of Fairmont; two sons, David L. Curry Jr. of Green Bank, W.Va., and Dr. Daniel Curry of Frederica, Del.; one daughter, Mary Jane Rinard of Martinsburg, W.Va.; one brother, Luther, of Zephyr Hills, Fla.; three sisters, Eleanor Franklin of Spring Hill, Fla., Mary Venettozzi of Lost Creek, and Naomi Halterman of Monterey, Va.; and four grandchildren. One brother, William, preceded him in death.

Funeral services were held on September 30, 2004, at the Lost Creek SDB Church, with Rev. Don Shackelford officiating. Interment was in the church cemetery.

Springer.—Keith R. Springer, 49, of Niantic, Conn., died on October 10, 2004, at home surrounded by his family.

He was born on November 21, 1954, in St. Michaels Barbados, the son of Millcent Benjamin and Alonza G. Springer.

He served his country as an employee of NAVSEA (the Underwater Sound Lab) for the past 23 years. He was a graduate of City College of New York and later earned his Masters from the University of New Haven in Connecticut.

Keith was an avid golfer and a passionate fisherman who enjoyed traveling. He also loved track and field, and never passed up an opportunity to be a volunteer coach for several organizations. He was an active member of the Waterford, Conn., Seventh Day Baptist Church.

Survivors include his loving wife Avis; one son, Hamal; two daughters, Jani and Faith; his mother Millcent; one brother, Mervin; one sister Cecile; one granddaughter; many aunts and uncles; and a host of cousins and friends worldwide.

A celebration of Keith's life was held on October 14, 2004, at the Waterford (Conn.) SDB Church, with Pastor Leon Lawton and Rev. Alan Scott assisting. Burial was in Jordan Cemetery, Waterford.

Bond.—Marion Richard Bond, 77, died on October 28, 2004, in the Stonewall Jackson Memorial Hospital in Weston, W.Va., following an extended illness. Formerly a resident of Shadybrook, he lived at Crestview Manor in Jane Lew, W.Va., prior to his death.

Marion was born on September 17, 1927, the son of Eston C. "Bill" Bond and Margaret May "Maggie" (Rowe) Bond, and was a member of the Lost Creek, W.Va., Seventh Day Baptist Church.

He was the last surviving member of his immediate family. Marion leaves behind several cousins, including Cletus Pete Taylor and his wife,

Carol, of Pricetown, with whom he made his home for several years.

Funeral services were held on October 31, 2004, at the Floyd Funeral Home, with Rev. Martin Wine officiating. Interment followed in the Weston Masonic Cemetery.

Zwiebel.—Hans Kent Zwiebel, 43, died on November 22, 2004, in Clarksburg, W.Va.

He was born on October 22, 1961, the son of Doyle K. Zwiebel and Marie B. Zwiebel.

He was a member of the Middle Island Seventh Day Baptist Church in New Milton, W.Va., and attended the Salem, W.Va., SDB Church in his youth. He graduated from Salem College in 1984.

Survivors include his wife, Roberta; one son, Zachary, age 10; a daughter, Tesla, 13; his mother, Marie; one sister, Veronica Z. Sperry; and three nieces, one nephew, a grandniece and a grandnephew. In addition to his father, he was predeceased by one brother, Kevin.

Services and interment were held in Salem on November 26, 2004.

Death Notice

Madeline (Watts) Fitz-Randolph, 89, wife of Pastor Elmo FitzRandolph of Boulder, Colo., passed away on December 3, 2004.

The houselights dim, the music comes up, the curtains open. On stage, the cast appears before a picturesque set.

Captivating dialogue, animated movement, and an inspiring tale introduces a magical world. The performance often includes choreographed dancing, live music, vibrant colors, mixed textures, and dynamic motion.

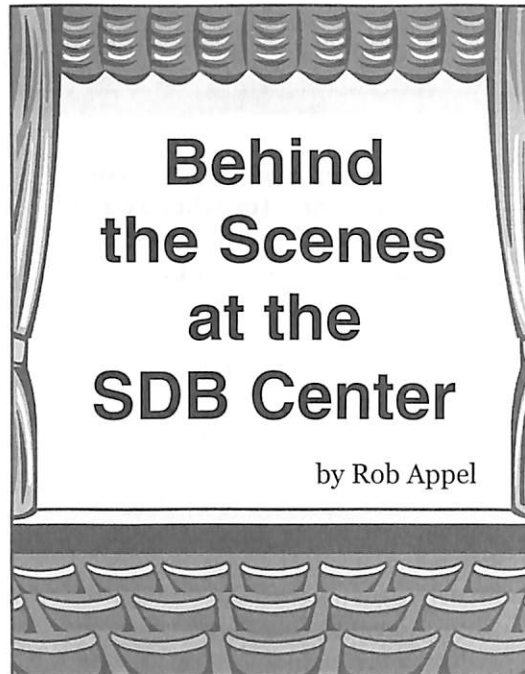
This is what the audience sees. However, what goes on behind the scenes?

Numerous responsibilities fall on the producer, the crew, and the production and technical staffs. Each has specific duties; other tasks they share as a team.

The producer manages while the director creates. The director makes decisions based on the group's recommendations. The producer is the right hand of the director. Their mutual respect for and understanding of each other is essential to a successful play. The show must go on!

Good organization is needed to complete any job within a specific timeframe. Like a well-planned play, that is where General Services (G.S.) comes in at the SDB Center in Janesville.

The coordinated effort of the G.S. staff is what makes everything else work with ease. Laboring "behind the scenes," General Services works in concert with the vari-



ous Boards and Agencies to make sure the ministries of the local church are being supported.

G.S. is the keystone of the SDB Center, and it must be capable of balancing all activities simultaneously. It is not glamorous or "out in front" receiving the applause. However, the G.S. is as important to the livelihood of the overall ministry of SDBs as the Boards and Agencies are.

In a bold and generous move, the Memorial Fund has offered to match all gifts to the denomination from December 1, 2004, through February of 2005. These are gifts from you designated to a Board or Agency, the General Fund, or through your local church as undesignated funds.

The Memorial Fund Board has taken steps to ensure that the work of Seventh Day Baptists can go beyond the day-to-day possibilities. We now have an opportunity to double the funds we receive. This opens up many new avenues of ministry that we normally wouldn't be able to support without the Memorial Fund's generosity.

Please consider giving to the work of Seventh Day Baptists, not only locally but around the world. Your generous gifts—to General Services or any of our Boards—will go a long way in furthering the ministry of all SDBs. *SR*

Denominational Dateline

January 2005

- 9-11 North American Baptist Fellowship, Orlando, Fla.—Rob Appel
- 14-16 West Palm Beach, Ft. Lauderdale, and Miami, Fla., SDB churches—Appel
- 21-23 Memorial Fund Quarterly Meeting, Houston church, Bellaire, Texas—Morgan Shepard, Appel, Gordon Lawton
- 22 Rockville, R.I.—Kirk Looper
- 23 Board of CE Director's Meeting, Alfred Station, N.Y.—Andrew Camenga
- 23 SDB Missionary Society Board of Managers Meeting, Westerly, R.I.—Looper
- 29 Metro-Atlanta SDB Church, Hiram, Ga.—Appel
- 29-30 Council on Ministry Mid-Year Meeting, SDB Center, Janesville, Wis.—Lawton

February

- 5 Tract and Communication Council Core Committee, SDB Center—Kevin Butler
- 25 Coordinating Leadership Team meets in Daytona Beach, Fla.
- 26-28 General Council meets in Daytona Beach

March

- 5 North Loup, Neb., SDB Church—Appel
- 13-17 Committee on the Uniform Series Meeting, Charlotte, N.C.—Camenga
- 14 Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, Washington, D.C.—Butler
- 20 SDB Missionary Society Board of Managers Annual Meeting, Westerly—Looper

KEVIN'S

ORNER

Knowing God firsthand

Crystal approached me the other day and asked me if I did devotions.

"Well," I explained, "I guess you could consider my newsletter articles as devotions, along with some of my editorials, and sermons and..."

"No, Dad—not writing," she interrupted. "Do you *DO* devotions??"

"Oh, you mean like quiet time and Bible study?"

I went on to list the various books and resources that I've used in the past: a four-year Study Bible; Chambers' *My Utmost for His Highest*; Spurgeon's "Morning and

Evening" devotional; the usual pocket-size quick-reads...

And then I had to "fess up." I hadn't been doing them lately on a regular basis.

I'm afraid that I might feel that my sermon preparation and denominational work "exempts" me from any extra Bible time. WRONG! I still need to do my devotions!

So I thumbed through a little devotional book by Max Lucado ("Grace for the Moment"), and guess what one of the entries talked about? Having a daily quiet time.

Max mentioned the usual frustrations and excuses, and added, "So rather than spend time with God, listening for His voice, we'll let *others* spend time with Him

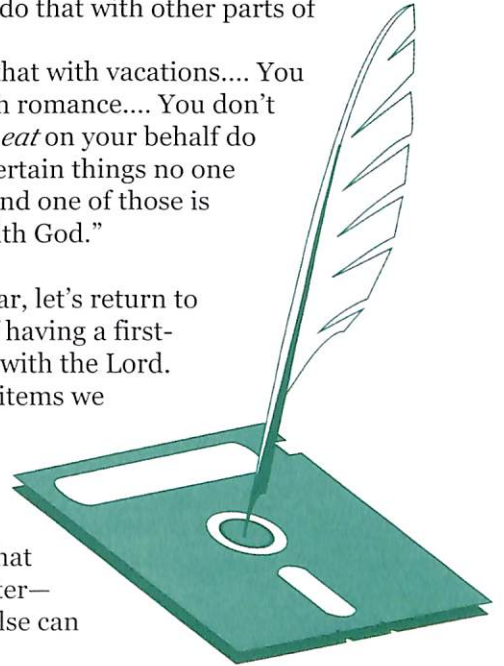
and then benefit from *their* experience. Let *them* tell us what God is saying. After all, isn't that why we pay preachers?..."

Max continued: "If that is your approach, if your spiritual experiences are secondhand and not firsthand, I'd like to challenge you with this thought: Do you do that with other parts of your life?"

"You don't do that with vacations.... You don't do that with romance.... You don't let someone else *eat* on your behalf do you? There are certain things no one can do for you. And one of those is spending time with God."

In this New Year, let's return to the good habit of having a firsthand experience with the Lord.

I pray that the items we share in the *SR* will challenge you to go to the Word, go to God, and sense that personal encounter—because no one else can do it for you.



Moving soon?

Please let us know of your change of address. It costs us money every time an issue is returned to us, and sometimes we get several issues a day! Help us be good stewards by sending us your proper address. Thank you.

The Sabbath Recorder
PO Box 1678
Janesville WI 53547

Phone:
 (608) 752-5055

E-mail:
 editor@seventhdaybaptist.org

SR Correspondents,

Thank you for keeping us informed of your family news.

If you need more of the two-part information forms, please let us know. You may also e-mail your updates to us at:

editor@seventhdaybaptist.org

If you mail in obituaries cut or copied from the newspaper, please make sure that the death and service dates are listed, along with the location of the burial. Thank you.

Robe of Achievement

The SDB Women's Society is accepting nominations for the Robe of Achievement for 2005. Please consider a woman in your church who meets these criteria for nomination:



- Was/is active as a volunteer in some phase of denominational effort
- Has shown evidence of special service with her family and/or community
- Must be a committed Christian
- Must be an active member of a local Seventh Day Baptist church

You must submit a complete resumé that includes a life history detailing the nominee's achievements and activities.

Send all nominations to:
Robe Nominations
Audrey Fuller
908 N. Colonial Cir.
Daytona Beach, FL 32117

Or apply on-line at
www.sdbwboard.org

Deadline:
March 31, 2005

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 20, 2005, 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, 2004, to December 31, 2004.

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 28, 2005, 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