

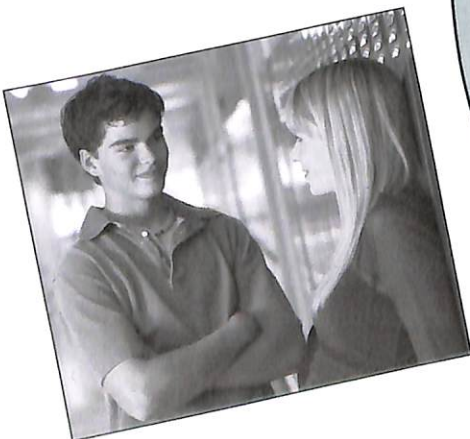
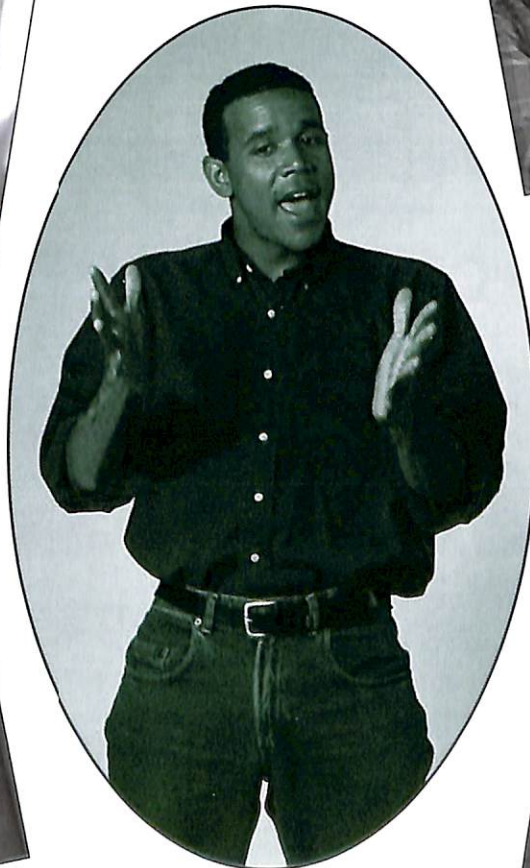


The Sabbath RECORDER

December 2005

News for and about Seventh Day Baptists

We've a story to tell





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

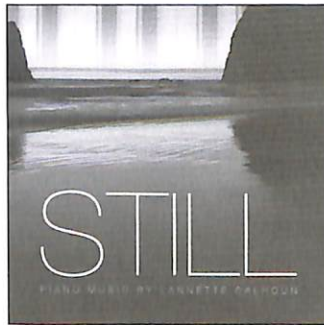
Young Adult Year-End Retreat



Dec. 28 – Jan. 1
Camp Wakonda
Milton, WI

See the November SR
for info and form

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SCSC

Summer Christian Service Corps

SCSC

Are you willing to serve with next year's Summer Christian Service Corps?

Does your church wish to host a team for service and outreach?

Applications for *Team Members* and *Church Projects* will be on a website or at your local church.

These applications will be on the Conference's website—www.seventhdaybaptist.org—for your convenience. We will also mail out member and project applications to each church, so contact your pastor or church office.

Please send the completed applications and other forms (for both Team Members and Church Projects) to: SCSC Committee, c/o Milton Seventh Day Baptist Church, 720 E. Madison Ave., Milton, WI 53563.

Team and church applications must be post-marked **no later than January 31, 2006**. There will be **NO exceptions**.

If you have any questions, please contact the Milton church at the above address, or e-mail the SCSC Committee at churchoffice@miltonsdb.org.

SCSC

SCSC



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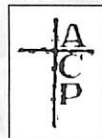


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We've a story to tell

The power of the Blood and a personal testimony

by John B. Peil

For those wishing to bring others to Christ, here's rule number one: Don't bother trying to evangelize if you don't have a testimony.

I don't know of anyone who has chosen Jesus because he's "philosophically pleasing." Jesus doesn't give you logical solutions; he gives you peace. You get peace in your relationship with God and peace in your spirit.

Are you at peace today? If you are, that's the message your co-worker or friend needs to hear. The Blood and the testimony. Salvation and freedom.

There is power

Nobody cares about our rational arguments and Biblical doctrines. They care about the *power* of the Gospel.

Were you addicted to pornography? Have you been guilty of bitterness and hate? Were you molested as a child? Have you been raped?

- The blood of Jesus Christ has the power to heal those wounds.
- The blood of Jesus Christ has the power to cleanse your scarlet sins.
- The blood of Jesus Christ gives you the power to crucify your flesh.
- The blood of Jesus Christ gives you the power to drive demons and evil spirits out of your life.

Two parts of evangelism

*"Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: 'Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. They overcame him by the **blood** of the Lamb and*

by the word of their testimony...'" (Revelation 12:10-11 NIV, emphasis mine).

This verse presents the two parts of evangelism: The shed blood of Jesus Christ and a personal testimony.

Two mistakes can be made in trying to bring someone to a saving faith in Jesus Christ. First, you can present the Gospel simply as a means to better one's own personal life (health, wealth, and prosperity), or, you can present what I call the "Gospel of Death Insurance." That is to say, the work of Jesus Christ only makes a difference after you die.

Holes in the "Prosperity Gospel"

Here's a story that illustrates the poverty of the "Prosperity Gospel."

Imagine that you have boarded an airplane that, unbeknownst to you, is going to crash into the middle of the sea. During mid-flight, someone offers you a parachute. He goes on and on about how wonderful life will be once you're wearing this parachute; all of the benefits and so on.



***Are you at peace today?
If you are, that's the message your
co-worker or friend needs to hear.***

So, wanting a better life, you put on the big orange jumpsuit and 35-pound backpack, expecting great things to start happening.

Heading back to your seat, you start bumping into everyone walking down the crowded airplane aisle. Angry passengers tell you to get away. As you finally, painfully, make your way to your spot, you notice how difficult and cumbersome it is to sit down with all of your "life changing" gear on. Sitting in the middle seat doesn't help any; the passengers on your right and left begin to heap abuse on you.

The final straw comes when a flight attendant—trying to serve hot

coffee to the person next to you—spills all of it into your lap since you are sitting so far forward.

In that moment of anger and disillusionment, you tear off the jumpsuit and heavy backpack, quite finished with any and all things associated with parachutes... and you wind up drowning in the middle of the sea along with the rest of the passengers.

Jesus paid the penalty

Here is the first, and in my mind the most important, part of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: His blood paid for your sins.

Every time you aren't absolutely perfect you earn the death penalty. For every sin and failure, you deserve to be thrown into hell to suffer for all of eternity. Jesus Christ paid the penalty for each one of your sins.

When you get to the final judgment, it's kind of like paying for your dinner at a restaurant. You come before God's throne and He asks you, "How are you going to pay for all of this?" Those who have accepted the free gift of salvation will merely point to Jesus and say, "My friend's got this one." Those who have rejected Christ will have to pay for themselves. *"The ransom for a life is costly, no payment is ever enough" (Psalm 49:8).*

So don't try and sell just the *earthly* benefits of the Gospel. People are going to hell and you need to offer them a way out. If they were on that

airplane, they would have gladly worn that jumpsuit and parachute—regardless of the consequences—if they had realized the whole "show" was crashing into the sea.

By... their testimony

Now many of us could surely call out an "amen" to all of this. Fantastic. But there is another part to the Gospel. You see, when God says that the brothers overcame the devil "by the word of their testimony," He is saying that the Gospel is living and active. It is not a Gospel of "Death Insurance," but—as Isaiah 53 so powerfully states—it is a Gospel that revitalizes every part of your failed life.

When you give your life to Jesus Christ, you become justified: Just-If-I'd-Never-Sinned. However—and this is my main point—all of the *consequences* for your sins, all of the emotional wounds, all of the physical deformities, all of the evil spirits, and all of the childhood traumas still remain. Why?

He saves us, but that doesn't set us free from earthly bondages. The reason is that salvation (justification) and freedom (sanctification) are two entirely different processes.

After becoming a Christian, God gives you the power to bring your life into conformity with His Word. We call this sanctification. This process is what creates powerful testimonies, not only of a changed destination

(salvation), but of a permanently changed character (freedom).

And all of this happens *after* you become a Christian, not before. The Bible manages, as always, to sum all this up in one simple sentence: *"By one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy" (Hebrews 10:14).*

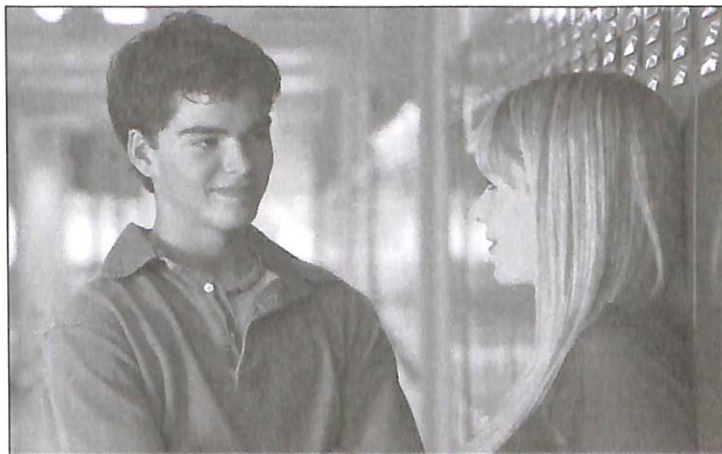
What "logic" is this?

Our idea of the Gospel has been emptied of power. Sermons are crafted with the idea of persuasion.

Logically, step by step, we attempt to prove the rationality of the Gospel. *"Greeks look for wisdom" (1 Corinthians 1:22).*

I have, time after time, found this approach to be completely unsatisfactory in bringing someone to salvation. People need to hear about the *power* of the Gospel, not its philosophy. *"For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power" (1 Corinthians 1:17).*

When I present the Gospel with logic and rationality, a wonderful conversation takes place. But it is a conversionless conversation. Point by point I can refute just about any argument a person can think up. After laying each of their arguments to rest, I present the overwhelming evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (which is



Whether you perceive it or not, God has put people into your life who are struggling with the same hurts and sins that you have overcome.



other person is compelled to have yet another conversation with me. They can't believe that I would think such a thing.

This actually confuses the person because I've said something that is horribly judgmental and critical.

the *cornerstone* of our entire faith).

At the end of all this, the person can be fascinated by my arguments, but still walk away unwilling to believe.

Logic is thrown away

I have had many opportunities to present the Gospel to the same person in different ways, each time gauging the effectiveness of each strategy. With a few gentlemen in particular, the second time around I threw away all of my logic and told them, quite respectfully and lovingly, that I believe they are going to be thrown into hell and tortured for all of eternity unless they accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Because I do all of this with a loving heart (without agitation or anger or condemnation in my voice), the

But the tone of my voice and the condition of my heart make these words strike to the heart of the person without offending them.

Remember the testimony

Make no mistake, you *must* tell the other person that they are going to be in torment *forever* unless they accept Christ's life, death, and resurrection. But that isn't enough. Remember: We need the Blood *and* the testimony.

While they are flubbering around in shock about what you have said, you proceed to tell them all of your deepest, darkest failures and wounds. Your candor about such intimate details will stun them into silence. They can't help but listen.

Perhaps the thought of exposing your inner self scares you. Please understand that, contrary to what people think, these intimate details cause others to begin comparing their own experience to yours. They don't judge, they identify.

People will listen

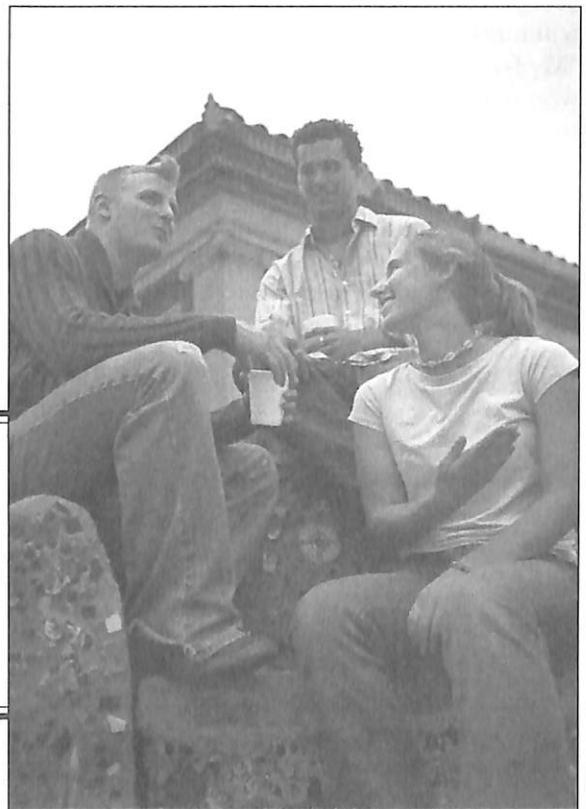
Whether you perceive it or not, God has put people into your life who are struggling with the same hurts and sins that you have overcome.

And that's the key to everything. Your testimony—that needs to be shared with every single person you meet—is about all of the sins, curses, evil spirits, and childhood traumas that the blood of Jesus Christ has helped you to overcome and cast out of your life.

That's when people start to listen. That's when people get saved. **SR**

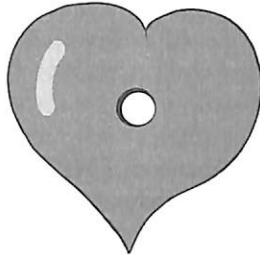
John B. Peil is pastor of the San Gabriel SDB Church in Azusa, Calif.

Don't try and sell just the earthly benefits of the Gospel. People are going to hell and you need to offer them a way out.

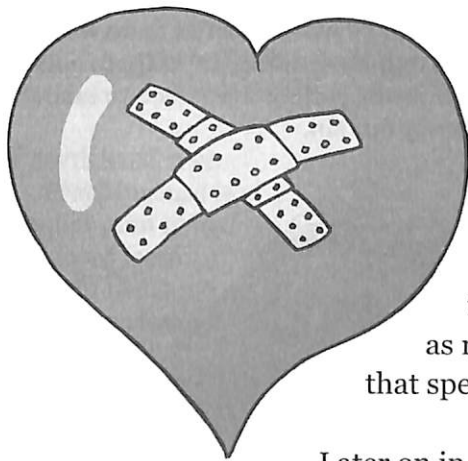


I had a hole in my heart

A child's perspective



I had a hole in my heart. My doctor said it was “congenital,” which he said meant I was born with it that way. He told me that was why I became tired so easily and couldn’t do the things other children could do.



But he also said he knew a doctor who could fix it up by sewing the hole closed.

Now my heart is fixed as good as new, thanks to that special heart doctor.

Later on in life, I discovered I had another hole in my heart—a different kind of hole. Not a physical one that the doctors could sew shut. It was a spiritual hole, and it gave me an empty feeling like something was missing from my life.

I tried to fill it with friends. But when they didn’t always do what I wanted to do, the empty ache was still there. Sometimes I tried to fill it by “getting even” when my friends made me sad, but that only made the feeling worse.

Then I read somewhere that everyone has this hole in their heart and that God made our hearts

that way. The writer explained that the hole isn’t round. It is shaped like God’s Son, Jesus. And Jesus is the only person who can fill it.

What I needed was to ask Jesus to come into my heart and fill that empty hole with Himself, and to forgive me for trying to fill it without Him. I also needed to ask forgiveness for trying to fill the hole with bad things.

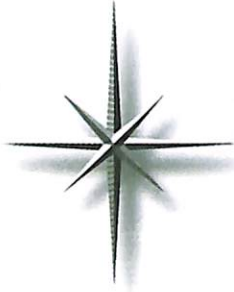
So I asked Jesus to come into my heart—and He did. I also asked Him to make every day of my life full and complete, and He is doing exactly that. He will fill the hole in your heart, too, if you ask Him. I hope you do.



In tribute to the author, Pastor John Conrod. His obituary is on page 26.

The gifts of the Magi

by Dale Rood



In the second chapter of Matthew, we find the familiar story of the wise men (or Magi) coming from the East in search of the one who was born King of the Jews.

Following the story down to verse 11, we learn that when they found the object of their quest, they “bowed down and worshipped him. Then they... presented him with gifts of gold and of incense [frankincense] and of myrrh” (NIV). Of course, the one receiving those gifts was the child, Jesus Christ.

While many believe that the wise men’s presentation is the basis of our Christmas gift-giving tradition, it is

unlikely that this is how it all actually began. As appealing as this picture is, let’s look elsewhere for the meaning behind the wise men’s gifts.

Characteristics and identity

The gifts the Magi gave to Jesus point to his identity and indicate the nature of our expected response.

The picture here is like that presented in the Christmas carol, “We Three Kings.” The three gifts attest to three characteristics of Jesus which must all be true for him to be who he is and to do what he did: He is **King**; he is **God**; and he is our perfect **Sacrifice** to take away our sin.



Myrrh

Myrrh is a fragrant, bitter-tasting gum resin obtained from the trunks of certain small trees grown in southern Arabia and eastern Africa. While it is primarily used in making perfume and incense, it is also used as a spice for preparing bodies for burial.



John 19:39 indicates that myrrh was among the spices applied when Nicodemus helped Joseph of Arimathea to wrap Jesus' body for burial after his crucifixion. Thus the gift of myrrh anticipates Christ's sacrificial death on our behalf to remove our sins. This gift challenges us to receive him as our Savior from sin.

Frankincense

Frankincense is a similar gum resin obtained from trees in the same regions as myrrh. It gives off a strong, pleasant odor when burned, and it's used to make incense, which was part of the Taber-



nacle and Temple worship of the Jewish people. (See Exodus 37:25-29). Hence frankincense was a key ingredient in the worship of God.

That the wise men brought a gift of frankincense to the Christ child acknowledges that he is, indeed, God. The carol "We Three Kings" states that, "Incense owns a Deity nigh, Prayer and praising, all men raising, Worship Him, God on high." The gift of frankincense points to our need to worship Christ as God.

Gold

Gold has been the most highly valued precious metal throughout the ages. Solomon's greatness as a king is characterized by the amount of gold he had. (See 1 Kings 10:14-23.)



Kingship indicates someone who has authority over a region. The gift of gold points to the authority of Jesus Christ as King, and this means it is necessary for us to submit to him as servants. At the Christmas carol says, "King forever, ceasing never, Over us all to reign." This gift calls

us to yield ourselves to the Lord Jesus as our eternal King.

God's greater gift

The "real" giving that marks Christmas then is not so much us giving presents to each other, nor even the wise men presenting gifts to the Christ Child. The genuine giving is God's giving to us, in the person of Jesus Christ. The gifts of the Magi merely *point* to God's greater gift, Jesus.

Think about how Mary and Joseph—plain, hard-working folks who were barely eking out a living—may have felt about the expensive gifts they received from the wise men. Also consider the wise men, how they sought the King of the Jews and found him in a humble carpenter's home.

We find God's gift in unexpected places. We may even feel unworthy of this gift; however, God wants us to have it.

Will you receive God's gift, Jesus Christ? Will you receive his entire gift of "King, and God, and Sacrifice"? **SR**

Rev. Dale Rood is pastor of the Dodge Center, Minn., SDB Church.

We Three Kings *Text and music by John H. Hopkins Jr.*

We three kings of Orient are: Bearing gifts
we traverse afar—
Field and fountain, moor and mountain—
Following yonder star.*

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain: Gold I bring
to crown Him again,
King forever, ceasing never Over us all to reign.*

Frankincense to offer have I: Incense owns
a Deity nigh;
Prayer and praising, all men raising,
Worship Him, God on high.*

Myrrh is mine: its bitter perfume, Breathes a life of
gathering gloom—
Sorr'wing, sighing, bleeding, dying, Sealed in the
stone-cold tomb.*

Glorious now behold Him arise: King and God and
Sacrifice;
Alleluia, Alleluia! Earth to heav'n replies.*

***Refrain—**
O star of wonder, star of night, Star with royal beauty
bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding, Guide us to thy
perfect light.

Soundings from Down Under

by Pastor John Camenga

Linda and I have been in Queensland, Australia, less than two months and are finding the experience both exciting and challenging. In some ways it is “like home,” with a climate similar to Daytona Beach, Fla.

We are now entering spring as North America slides into fall. “Easter lilies,” jacarandas, and less familiar flowers are creating a riot of color right now.

Rugged individualism (that most Americans associate with Daniel Boone and other frontiersmen) is still part of the Australian self-image. The heritage of refugees and transported convicts who came here with nothing—and built a good life by sheer determination—is still strong.

However, this “I did it myself” thinking works against the Gospel message. We *can't* do it ourselves. We need God's forgiveness through Christ to live a truly joy-filled and enduring life.

While we are located in a prosperous and comparatively well-watered area, the climate of most of the con-

tinental is dry and harsh. At present, we are experiencing the most severe drought Queensland has suffered in more than a century—even for this wetter, more humid coastal strip.

Evangelism among the Aborigines might seem more dramatic, but there are many people right here who need to hear the Gospel.

About 90% of the country's population is concentrated in a narrow strip along the eastern coast, running from Adelaide on the south to a bit north of our location at Brisbane. This could be roughly compared to a strip 60 miles wide running from Boston to Miami.

Evangelism among the Aborigines

and in the Outback might seem more dramatic, but there are many people right here in this coastal strip who need to hear the Gospel message.

Our Brisbane (Beenleigh) congregation is fairly small. Attendance runs between 25 and 30 most Sabbaths. This will be reduced when a family moves to Fiji.

There are many fine Bible students in the group, with several having spent much time studying prophecy and the Second Coming. Our preaching and teaching seeks to broaden this knowledge to include more practical, daily-living applications of Bible principles.

This congregation is loving and supportive. They seem united in their desire to follow the leader they have called. There is a vision for outreach way beyond their own area and a hope to help other groups form in the coming years.

Please pray for our ministry here as we seek to be used to present salvation to the lost and encourage the saved. **SR**

Denominational Dateline

December

- 3 Hebron, Pa., Seventh Day Baptist Church—Andrew Camenga
- 3 Rockville, R.I., SDB Church—Kirk Looper
- 8 Seventh Day Baptist Center, Janesville, Wis.—Ron Elston
- 9-11 New Auburn, Wis., Seventh Day Baptist Church—Elston, Calvin Babcock
- 10 Bay Area Seventh Day Baptist Church, Pinole, Calif.—Gordon Lawton

January, 2006

- 8-11 North American Baptist Fellowship Executive Meetings, Orlando, Fla.—Rob Appel

- 21-22 Seventh Day Baptist Memorial Fund Quarterly Meeting, Miami/Fort Lauderdale area of Florida—Babcock, Appel
- 22 SDB Missionary Society Board of Managers Meeting, Westerly, R.I.—Looper
- 28 Berlin, N.Y., Seventh Day Baptist Church—Kevin Butler
- 28-29 Council of Ministry (COM) at the Seventh Day Baptist Center, Janesville—Lawton

February

- 24 Coordinating Leadership Team (CLT), Daytona Beach, Fla.
- 25-27 General Council, Daytona Beach

Exploring the Sabbath

by Linda Greene

**Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1;
Luke 24:1; John 20:1**

All four Gospels are very careful to mention that the women who came to the tomb to anoint Jesus' body did so at the end of the Sabbath and found the tomb empty.

Many people support the idea of worshipping on Sunday as a celebration of the day that Christ rose from the grave. But we really don't know for sure when he rose. All we know is that Jesus was gone by the time the women got there.

Matthew is a little unclear about the sequence of events, but the other three disciples say that the stone was already rolled away when the women arrived.

Mark does say that Jesus rose "early on the first day of the week," but with the Jewish understanding that a day starts at sundown the day before, this still works out about the same.

My purpose here is not to argue for the validity of Sabbath or against worshipping on Sunday. I'm not going to "go there" any more than this. Instead, I want to explore keeping the Sabbath in light of its meaning and significance.

In considering the timing of the resurrection, why did God choose to figure the Sabbath into the resurrection story the way He did? Jesus could have spent any three days and nights in the grave, and his victory would have been just as complete and just as sweet.

So, why *did* God choose that the Sabbath would be the third and final day Jesus spent in the grave?

Everything God does has limitless levels of meaning and significance. We could read one verse of Scripture now and for all of eternity and never "get" all there is to be had from its message. So, let's consider this "one verse" that appears in all four Gospels.

I was taught that Jesus died on Wednesday and was buried shortly before sundown that evening. The next day was Passover, a Jewish day of celebration. These celebrations were often referred to as "sabbaths" (the John account does call it a "special" Sabbath) and were commemorated in the same way *the* Sabbath was. That was why Jesus' followers hurried to place him in the tomb.

If we then count forward three days and three nights exactly, we conclude that Jesus' resurrection occurred shortly before sundown on *the* Sabbath. (I'm not sure why the women didn't come back on Friday, but maybe with Passover the day before—and then preparation for the coming Sabbath—they were simply too busy.)

What an awesome picture this paints in my mind as I reflect back on what we've discovered the Sabbath represents!

The Sabbath is God's "visual aid" for grace and redemption. It foreshadowed from the dawn of time what God intended to accomplish through Jesus Christ.

Through His Son's death, we received freedom from the bondage and slavery of sin. The righteousness and holiness of God Himself was packaged and tied with a bow and offered to mankind totally free of charge, with no strings attached. No ifs, ands, or buts about it.

The Sabbath is a sign of God's mindboggling mercy and grace to His fallen and imperfect children.

That's what Sabbath is all about. How wonderful that as this particular Sabbath day came to a close in Jerusalem almost 2,000 years ago—as sundown signaled the completion of another day of resting in the goodness and provision of God—Jesus broke Satan's grip on humanity once and for all. He shattered the death barrier and re-

turned triumphantly to his followers.

Jesus' resurrection even happened in a garden, reminding us of that first Sabbath—and man's fall—that took place in a garden so long ago.

Jesus returned to his Father, where he sits at His right hand for the rest of eternity, ready to intercede for us. He awaits our arrival as his bride, his inheritance, paid for with his own blood.

Obviously, Jesus didn't need the stone rolled away to rise from the grave. He was long gone by the time the angels rolled it away. The stone was removed from the tomb's opening so that when those mourning women arrived that Sunday morning, they would see the empty tomb and realize what had happened.

The stone was moved for you and me also, so that human eyes could peer into the dark tomb and give us an eyewitness account of the angel's presence and proclamation, "He is not here—he is risen!"

Maybe that's another reason why God chose to include the Sabbath in the resurrection story. If it had been just any day that Jesus died, the anointing for burial would have been completed before the initial burial, and those women would not have returned to find the empty tomb.

Lots of speculation and questions, I realize, but one thing we know for sure: The work of salvation was fully accomplished as that Sabbath came to an end. From then on, for the rest of time until we reach heaven, we are to spend our Sabbaths resting from our own striving and laboring. We are to rest in the provision and unfathomable love of God, rejoicing in the completed work of Jesus Christ on the cross. **SR**

Next month, we will examine our last two Scriptures on the Sabbath—Colossians 2:16-17 and Hebrews 4:1-16.

Midwest mom receives Robe of Achievement 2005

She spreads love and cheer wherever she goes and yet stays in the background, taking no credit while encouraging others to help in various ways.

Born and raised in the Midwest, our recipient is married and has raised three children, all members of various SDB churches scattered across the country. She is friendly and well liked by everyone who comes in contact with her.

Our honoree, who often spends time with people who are alone and need a friend, is wonderfully creative and has a special way with children. She has organized children's church, and prepared activities and crafts to accompany the Bible stories. She has served as a Sabbath School Superintendent and has taught many Sabbath School classes.

Teaching and directing Vacation Bible School and neighborhood Bible Clubs is another of our recipient's gifts.

She has been a Youth Fellowship director, and a cook and co-director for Year-End Youth Retreats. She has cooked for and worked at several SDB summer camps, and has received training to lead Precept Bible Studies for women.

Our friend has been an inspiration and role model to many. She remembers the elderly and ill at Christmas and other holidays, delivering baskets of "goodies" and necessities. She spreads love and cheer wherever she goes and yet stays in the background, taking

no credit while encouraging others to help in various ways.

She seems to constantly look for opportunities to help people. If someone has a problem, she's available to talk and pray with them. She encourages others to have faith in God and trust in His control, giving hope for a better tomorrow.

She continually supports and encourages adults as well as young people, and has served as president of the Honor Roll for St. Mary's College for several years.

Our recipient offers a helping hand wherever she sees a need. Often, she's the one who arrives early to set up for special events and activities, and then sees that things are cleaned up and put away before she leaves. She has been active in Ladies Aids wherever she has lived, seizing opportunities to witness for her Lord and Savior.

Our honoree has cooked meals for those attending Missionary Society meetings, and does many other things to help keep that office running smoothly. For many years, she has been the cook and meal organizer for the Summer Christian Service Corps (SCSC) training sessions sponsored by the Women's Board. In the process, she has influenced dozens of SCSC trainees with her good Christian example.

The 2005 Robe of Achievement goes to Vivian Looper. **SR**

Robe Nominations

The SDB Women's Society is accepting nominations for the Robe of Achievement for 2006. Please see the recent *SRs* for more details, or apply on-line at www.sdbwboard.org.

Deadline is
March 31, 2006



Vivian Looper accepted this year's Robe of Achievement.



Women's Society page by Susan Bond
www.sdbwboard.org

From panic to praise

Testimony by Linda Bond Graffius

My name is Linda Graffius. I'm the wife of Don Graffius, who served as the president of Conference 2005. I'm also a mother.

Along with the joys of motherhood, I've experienced sad times.

I am a woman who has endured painful days of depression, feelings of worthlessness, hours of crying, sleepless nights, and times of great fear and panic. For many years, I feared meeting people, traveling, entertaining, speaking in public, and even talking on the phone.

Without God and Don, I wouldn't be writing this.

Don provided constant encouragement—taking me to doctors, having people pray for me, loving me the way I was, reminding me of my family and that God still cared for me.

Why am I divulging this? Because it helps to explain how I felt and reacted during my year as the wife of the Conference president.

My journey to Conference 2005 in Holland, Mich., actually began in July of 2004.

In my quiet times, the Holy Spirit often brings to my mind people, places, and events. One day, I was "told" that Don would be asked to be Conference president—sometime soon. Of course, I didn't like the idea and began thinking of reasons why this wouldn't be good for *me*.

I would be left alone many days as Don traveled to meetings and visited churches. His presidency would involve hours of telephone calls, letters, and e-mails. I would have to attend many meetings with him and act confidently while trying to remember everyone's name. I feared that there would be tension as both of us



President Don and Linda Graffius at this year's Conference in Michigan.

strained to prepare for a national event involving 500-plus people.

A major concern was that if this Conference didn't go well, it would reflect on me. But I didn't share any of this with my husband.

When Don came to me during Conference 2004 [at George Fox University in Newberg, Ore.,] and told me that he had been asked to be president in 2005, I wanted to cry, laugh, and panic. And I did!

Don also said that if I didn't want him to serve as president, he wouldn't. He understood my struggles, but he would need my help if he said "Yes." After praying about it, I said I would support him.

Don immediately began traveling across the continent. He would come home thrilled by the people he had met and the experiences he had had. However, we soon received word that the other leaders wanted me to travel with Don whenever possible. They felt it was important for our congregations to get a "woman's perspective." I took a deep breath and pleaded, "Lord, help me do this!"

We began traveling to many states

and events as God helped me to mirror the Conference theme of being "strong, steady, and enthusiastic." Each visit blessed me.

I saw new forms of worship, heard new songs, and was amazed at the hospitality. I experienced new ideas, felt the enthusiasm, and was overwhelmed by the love of God's people. And He gave me the strength to continue traveling.

As Don's schedules at work and Conference surprisingly fell into place, it helped me realize even more that God cared about our "ministry."

When it was time for Conference 2005, I began to panic even though I knew that people were praying for us.

The day I arrived at Hope College, Don immediately met me and showed me where to go, paving the way for me.

I could go into detail about the entire week, but I want to emphasize that God really helped me!

He gave me the confidence to meet new people, the desire to remain in all of the meetings, the joy of hearing the wonderful music and testimonies, and the pleasure of working with many people.

He also gave me courage to go to new places, the blessing of watching the children, humility when I saw each giving pastor, and the excitement of seeing people come to the Lord.

It thrilled me to witness immediate answers to prayer, and to experience the love of a busy but extremely caring and patient husband.

Foremost, God taught me once again that He is in control and has plans for me—despite my protests and fears. **SR**



Pearls from the Past by Don A. Sanford, historian emeritus

An illegal vote on the Sabbath

One of the pleasures of historical research is discovering “pearls” where least expected. This is especially true when a genealogical search reveals that some of our ancestors’ stands on the Sabbath put them in direct opposition to the society of their day.

One such Sabbath witness occurred in Atchison County, Kansas, in December of 1891. An article in the January 14, 1892 *Sabbath Recorder* explained the controversy:

“It appears that the school district in which many of our people live held a meeting upon the Sabbath to vote on the question of bonding the district for the building of a new school-house. Our people remained away from the meeting and the bonds were voted.

“Whether the election was placed upon the Sabbath for the purpose of ruling the Seventh-day people out does not appear from anything we have seen; but some have contested the legality of the bonds on the ground that they were not voted by the proper majority of the district.”

The *Atchison Daily Globe* of December 30 recorded the following about this contested vote:

“The application of the Seventh Day Baptists of school district No. 73 in Atchison County to restrain the issuance of certain school bonds voted on the day of rest, which cause has occupied the attention of the district court this week, reveals some interesting facts hitherto not generally known.

“In the year 1857, when Kansas had its first boom, a colony of Seventh Day Baptists located near Pardee. Among them was Joshua Wheeler, who has since been conspicuous in Kansas politics, and who has for many years been a regent of the State Agricultural College. Mr. Wheeler was a witness in the case referred to, and testified yesterday.

“In 1863 the colony organized a church which has experienced a slow but steady growth. It has now 250 members, but only a portion of them reside in school district 73. Their church is located north of Nortonville, and a number of individual businessmen of that town are numbered among its members.

“The first minister of the church was Rev. A.F. Randolph. After his death, Rev. S.R. Wheeler was pastor for fourteen years, and its present pastor is Rev. G.M. Cottrell.

“The faith of the Seventh Day Baptists does not differ greatly from the faith of other Baptists, excepting that they keep holy the seventh day of the week instead of the first. Their Sabbath begins at sundown of Friday night and lasts until sundown Saturday night. They are found at work on Sunday, but never on Saturday, unless they perform necessary work. The stores of the Nortonville merchants who are believers in the faith are closed on Saturday.

“Some months ago, the school trustees of district 73, in order to carry a bond election, set the day of election of the district for Saturday. Two-thirds of the voters of the district are Seventh Day Baptists and did not go to the polls. The bond received a majority.

“Now the Seventh-day people ask that the election be set aside because the bonds were not voted by a major-

ity of the voters of the district, as the law provides. They claim that the necessary majority did not vote at all.

“The amount of the bonds is only \$600, and are wanted to erect a new school building. Leslie Randolph, a well-known Atchison County Republican, is a Seventh Day Baptist.”

The January 1, 1892 issue of the *Nortonville News*, a weekly newspaper published by two young brethren, gave a brief account of the trial and the grounds for the action:

“The case of S.H. Stillman *et al*, vs. J.H. Freeland *et al*, involving the legality of the bond election held in school district No. 73 in Atchison County on September 5, 1891, was in Atchison district court this week.

“Two main points were involved in the case: One, whether the board has the right to call an election to be held on Saturday in a district where a majority, nearly two-thirds in this instance, observe that day as the Sabbath. And the other, whether the affirmative vote must be a majority of the electors residing in the district.

“Questions as to sufficiency of the petition for an election, and the notices, were also in the case.”

Eventually, the court ruled that the bond election on the Sabbath had been illegal.

If this vote was designed, in any way, to compel Seventh Day Baptists to violate the Sabbath and thus lose their franchise, it was deemed a total failure. And it deserved to be!

Are Seventh Day Baptists *today* as conscious of the Sabbath? Will we take a stand—even an unpopular one—to witness for the Sabbath? **SR**

Feature Index for 2005

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Alfred Station, NY June, Oct.	Miami, FL April	Stonefort, IL Sept.
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Central, MD May, Oct.	Salem, WV July-Aug.	White Cloud, MI Oct.



Positive changes in *The Helping Hand*

Have you seen *The Helping Hand in Bible Study* recently? If you haven't, I encourage you to get a copy to see how helpful it has become.

Most Seventh Day Baptist churches have Sabbath School classes, and many SDBs who live too far away to attend a church hold family Bible studies.

We organize such studies so that we can grow together in Christ. We want to maintain our focus on Scripture so God can reveal Himself and His will to us, all the while drawing us closer to Him. *The Helping Hand* is designed to help us stay dedicated to this goal.

Long-term and short-term direction

The Helping Hand provides both long-term and short-term direction.

The lesson plans on which the quarterly is based tries to cover much of the Bible in a six-year cycle. While *all* of the Bible isn't included in any given cycle, the group that plans the cycle carefully analyzes what Scriptures are being used and which are being missed as a new series is drawn up.

In addition to this long-term direction, *The Helping Hand* guides us each quarter by using a theme to

tie together multiple lessons. These themes help us remember the past lessons, and how a particular Scripture passage relates to other verses. All of this aids in understanding and appreciating the breadth and depth of what God intends for us to learn.

Encourages discussion

The Helping Hand also encourages group discussion.

meaningful group discussion.

Develops Bible skills

The Helping Hand also helps its readers develop personal Bible-study skills.

The "Daily Bible Meditations" encourage you to ponder a passage each day. Those who work through the meditations will come to the group discussion with their heads

We want to maintain our focus on Scripture so God can reveal Himself and His will to us.

Each week includes a three-sentence "Heart of the Lesson." This identifies what the lesson is about and asks a question about life. It also hints at how the passage can answer that question.

Following the "Heart of the Lesson" are two or three goals which encourage the class leader to cover the facts of the lesson, as well as uncover how the Scripture applies to life today. These sections, along with commentary that explains the passage, provide a starting point for

full of thoughts, questions, insights, and confessions.

The questions that are provided each week encourage us to notice the basic facts of the text and explore how the passage might influence our daily lives.

But wait, there's more!

In addition to all these elements, each lesson:

- includes hints for teaching
- provides devotional passages related to the theme
- reminds people to explore the context by naming background texts
- provides a related verse to memorize

The Helping Hand in Bible Study is an excellent tool for Sabbath School classes or personal Bible study. If you haven't seen it recently, why not order a copy? **SR**

In 2006, Christian Education Emphasis Sabbath will be held on the Sabbath following Labor Day (September 9, 2006).

* * *

To all who gave money or sent notes in response to the Board's special fundraising effort in October, thank you for your generous financial support and gracious encouragement.



FOCUS on Missions

Togo has much to overcome

by Kirk Looper

In the fall of 2004, I received a message from Pastor Daniel Kanyandekwe of Togo in West Africa, indicating that he was interested in obtaining more information about Seventh Day Baptists.

With assistance from our Conference headquarters in Janesville, Wis., we sent Pastor Kanyandekwe a set of tracts and some books to help familiarize him with SDBs. It didn't take long for him to respond. He said that he had received the shipment, and that he—along with his family and congregation—was studying the material.

Pastor Kanyandekwe and the others discovered that our SDB beliefs were exactly what they had expected, and that they were in complete agreement with them. It took a year for them to establish the first Seventh Day Baptist Church in Togo.

The pastor has spent the last two years building up a number of interested groups that have joined him to form an SDB Conference in Togo. We praise God for opening doors so that people can be exposed to the Gospel!

One of the difficulties of organizing and developing a Conference is coming up with reliable ways of communication. In many cases, the internet has been a godsend.

Pastor Kanyandekwe uses the internet at home but cannot use it when "in the bush." He has to wait until he gets back home before he can contact me about his work. When at home, he asks me questions via the internet and requests study materials to assist him in organizing a Conference in Togo.

In October of 2005, the northern section of Togo was invaded by grasshoppers that destroyed all of the crops. Since then, the rains have

ceased and the resulting drought has made life almost unbearable. The estimated cost to support those living in that area is well over \$300,000 in U.S. funds.

Understandably, we are most concerned about the welfare of those in Togo who are affiliated with the SDB Conference. But some of the money that is sent is shared with other family members who may not be part of the Conference.

Pastor Kanyandekwe had high expectations when he told me that they needed a large sum of money, so I had to quickly explain about our polity and the availability of funds from our Conference. After clarifying the situation for him, he appeared to be more willing to accept what limited help we could offer. He continues to let us know that the needs remain.

A group of church leaders traveled 375 miles north toward the West African country of Burkina Faso (formerly Upper Volta). It was in this region that the grasshoppers wreaked such havoc. The inhabitants there do not know Jesus.

Church leaders traveling there were like explorers, arriving with just what they could carry. Located near the desert, it was difficult to find water to drink, and the temperature was always around 95 degrees Fahrenheit.

The people in that area believe that no man can survive without a *fetich* (god) that he must offer sacrifices to.

The church leaders explained to the people that there is only one God, and that He sent Jesus to earth to set everyone free from their sins. Some of the inhabitants understood, but they were mostly the younger people and children.

The older people didn't respond to the message. Instead, they stayed in their homes and sacrificed to their *fetiches* to protect their children. However, they did allow their children to come to the meetings and hear about Jesus.

The visitors explained that there is One Who is more powerful than fetiches and other spirits, and His name is God—the Eternal Father Who doesn't have origin and doesn't depend on men to exist.

In preparation for their trek, the leaders had packed "surgeon solution" in a small container, along with some cotton, to use if anyone was injured while traveling.

The church leaders found themselves surrounded by children who were very poor and had infected sores on their legs. They used all of their surgical supplies to clean the children's wounds. Before leaving the village, they were pleased to see that the wounds had healed.

The villagers thought that the men were doctors until they were told otherwise. The churchmen did tell the villagers that they were "healed" by Jesus. They told them that the reason for their trip was to heal the people from their sins through Jesus Christ.

In this area of Africa, the people's lives, in general, are miserable. They don't have clean water to drink, and they live in huts where mosquitoes bite freely, spreading deadly malaria. It is impossible to find mosquito nets in the villages to protect them while they sleep. Even Pastor Kanyandekwe developed malaria upon returning to Lomé, the capital of Togo.

Our SDB brethren in West Africa continue to request funds to allow them to return to their villages with nutritious food, clean water, and life-saving mosquito nets. **SR**



the BEACON

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

December 2005

Family influences

by Ben Wright, Milton, Wis.

For me, my family includes my mother and father, and brother and sisters. It also includes my stepdad, and especially my aunt and uncle and their children.

All these people played a critical role in shaping my character and making me who I am today. After all, that's what a family is—the people who love you enough to raise you through pain and trials and self-sacrifice in order to make you a better person.

What is family to *you*?

In some cases, the family hurts and tears down. The world is full of families that lack love and promote suffering.

Without God, the family loses much of its meaning. In that case, everything is a game of self-interest. However, *with* God, the family reaches its full potential.

From Adam and Eve on, the family has been the first social experience to train a new human to be a proper member of society. That's the family's primary purpose: to raise children to be productive members of their environment.

All of us were taught the basics from our family—right and wrong, consequences, proper and improper behavior. Most importantly, family is how we learn to relate to other people.

Things like love, anger, loyalty, forgiveness, and justice are first experienced in the setting of family,

and it is there that these emotions are usually felt most strongly. The family is a place where we can grow emotionally in a safe environment.

Are we setting a godly example? I say this with special regard to siblings. As brothers and sisters, we are all growing *together*; therefore, we should support and encourage each other.

Too often, we may be distracted by petty rivalries and arguments. I know that I have been guilty of that too many times myself. But those things really don't matter. In fact, they are actually a source of valuable experience, foreshadowing more portentous situations in the world.

All families have problems, but God uses even these to prepare us and help us grow, just as He promised.

While the family is one of God's most important institutions physically, it also affects us spiritually. In the New Testament, the Church is repeatedly compared to a family. As fellow believers, we need to be close to each other so that we may learn and be encouraged.

This is the way we are united in order to accomplish God's will here on earth. Christ is the Head, and we are the Body. The Church should be a place of love and acceptance, a safe environment for *spiritual* growth.

Satan understands the importance of family, too. He attacks God's work in both the physical and spiritual

realms. That is why we need to guard against temptations that are designed to undermine our relationships.

What hurts more than losing a dear family member? Or feeling betrayed by someone we love?

These sorts of things cause us to question God. They also break down the ties that make us strong in the Lord. They create a point of weakness that Satan seeks to exploit.

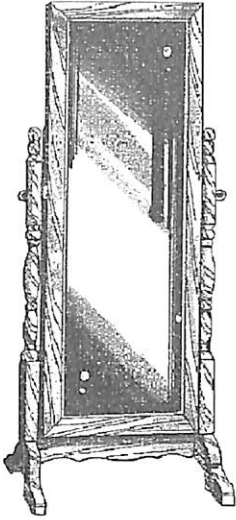
I can tell you this from personal experience, because two of my own sisters have rejected Christ in the past few years. This is a source of great trial. I have lost something in my connection to them, so much so that it's hard to think of them as a part of my family anymore.

The lesson I've learned through all of this is that God is faithful. No matter what happens, I know it will be for His glory. So I have hope, and so can everyone else.

We need to be a positive influence, leading our younger ones by example while learning through the actions of our elders.

The same goes for the Church. We need to support each other in our spiritual walks. How do you encourage your brothers and sisters in Christ? How do you learn from your elders? Do you set an example for those younger than yourself? **SR**

(Read Ephes. 2:19 and Rom. 12:10.)



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

A relative reconnect

It's hard to believe that Christmas is almost here again!

In spite of what modern society tells us, the most important aspect of this holiday is our Savior's birth. Jesus really is "The Reason for the Season."

Although it dims in comparison, another aspect of Christmas is becoming more meaningful to me every year: shared family time. Enjoying meals and gift-giving together, attending Christmas services as a family, joining in prayer around a table piled high with sumptuous food.

2005 has been a difficult year for me in some ways.

As I write this, my favorite uncle and an aunt, both on my father's side, are near death. My tax accountant, Cal—the subject of my April column—finally lost his battle with cancer. A high school classmate's wife died suddenly, as did the husband of a longtime friend.

In October, my brother's son, Kyle, made a mistake that cost him his life. He was only 20 years old, with so much of life still ahead of him. For such a bright young man, it was—and will always be—a tragedy.

Jim and his wife, Leanne, divorced a few years ago after nearly three decades of marriage, but my sister and daughter and I continue to consider Leanne "family." So we bought last-minute tickets and flew to California for Kyle's memorial service.

Upon returning to Wisconsin, all three of us agreed that the experience

had been life-changing. We had simultaneously relearned the importance of staying connected with relatives near and far. We vowed to stay in closer touch with Leanne, and especially Kyle's twin sister, Karla.

* * *

It's so easy to get caught up in the busyness of life at the expense of what's truly important. Beatle John Lennon wrote a song lamenting that "Life is what happens when you're making other plans."

It's all too easy to forget the importance of family. We become so focused on ourselves—on our own trials and joys—that we forget to share in the trials and joys of our loved ones. We end up concentrating on things instead of people.

We need to remember that families are forever.

When we have heated disagreements or personality clashes with loved ones—with a father or sister, an uncle or cousin, an in-law or an outlaw—we don't like to think of the permanence of family. Sometimes we'd rather grab some gigantic scissors and cut all those "ties that bind."

And yet, when we're drowning in a crisis, who are the first ones we turn to for a life preserver? Family members!

God established and blessed the "institution" of family: *"The Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him'"* (Genesis 2:18, NIV).

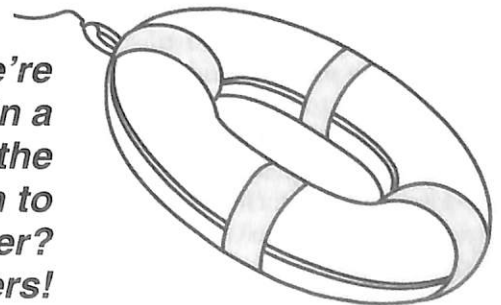
"God blessed them [Adam and Eve] and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth...'" (Genesis 1:28).

In spite of popular political pronouncements, "It takes a *family* to raise a child." And to raise and nurture a sibling, a niece, a parent, a grandparent.

Many of us often *think* about sending a note to cousin Jane. We often *think* about phoning Aunt Mary or visiting Uncle Joe. We often *think* about sending flowers to Grandma Betty. But we don't. And we have a thousand excuses why not.

When it comes to family, I want to reconnect. I want to be a "doer," not simply a "thinker." How about you? With God's help, that's what all of us can become. **SR**

**When we're
drowning in a
crisis, who are the
first ones we turn to
for a life preserver?
Family members!**



		<p><i>Making Christ's Mission OUR Mission</i></p> <p><i>Luke 4:18</i></p> <p>Houghton, N.Y. August 6-12, 2006</p>
		



The President's Page
by Robert Van Horn

More than just the doorway

It's December, and much of the world has turned its thought to Christmas!

For me, music is the highlight. I love to hear all the Christmas songs that have been written through the years. My children and I have prepared many songs to bring attention to the season. However, I would like to direct our thoughts to how Christmas—Christ's birth—ties in with this year's Conference theme of "Making Christ's Mission Our Mission."

The Gospel of Luke records the angel's song "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14). The angels were revealing the birth of the Messiah-Savior, and showing his purpose in coming—"to bring peace."

"What peace did he bring?" you may ask. The world is so full of wrong, hatred, greed, jealousy, and strife.

The carol, "I Heard the Bells," expresses exactly the same doubt in verse three: "And in despair I bowed my head: there is no peace on earth I said, for hate is strong and mocks the song of peace on earth, good will to men."

Yet, that carol goes on to express great hope: "Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: God is not dead, nor doth He sleep; the wrong shall fail, the right prevail, with peace on earth, good will to men."

We need to remember that we

don't have to belong to the world anymore. A choice has been given to the people of the world. We may choose to receive Jesus the Christ, or we may choose to receive Satan the deceiver, the "father of lies," the accuser.

The birth of Jesus the Messiah was just the beginning of Christ's mission! It is the door of entry to the Kingdom of Heaven. It is the beginning of the straight and narrow path.

I'm concerned that so often the Church allows the doorway to become the whole story. Without Christ's birth, there would be no final victory. Luke 4:18 declares that Jesus' purpose is "to preach the gospel to the poor... heal the brokenhearted; deliverance for the captives... recovering of sight to the blind... set at liberty them that are bruised..."

We have allowed the Church to be so focused on the door that many in the church continue to live as bro-

kenhearted, bruised, blind captives.

As you consider the joyous message of Christ's birth and his promise of peace, ask yourself, "Am I experiencing that promise?" Do you know how to help others experience that promise? What is the peace that Christ offers?

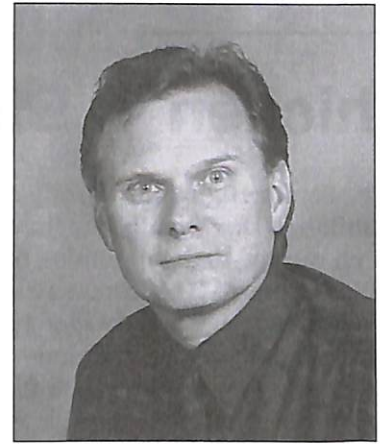
This Christmas, let's celebrate the victory God achieved when Jesus the Christ was born. The victory is God's peace to all who are willing to receive it.

John 14:27 put it this way: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you." (NIV).

Let's truly celebrate our Savior's birth by experiencing the *whole* promise. Thank you, God, for coming into the world as the incarnate form of Your Son, Jesus. **SR**

**Let's truly
celebrate our
Savior's birth by
experiencing the
whole promise.**





by Executive Director
Rob Appel

Your next step: Tithing

Almost everyone knows about tithing. Tithing is an age-old concept, endorsed by many major religions in the world. To tithe, for Christians, is to give back 10 percent of your earnings to your local church.

My vision is that all Seventh Day Baptists tithe. Together, we can make the Church work for social and humanitarian causes.

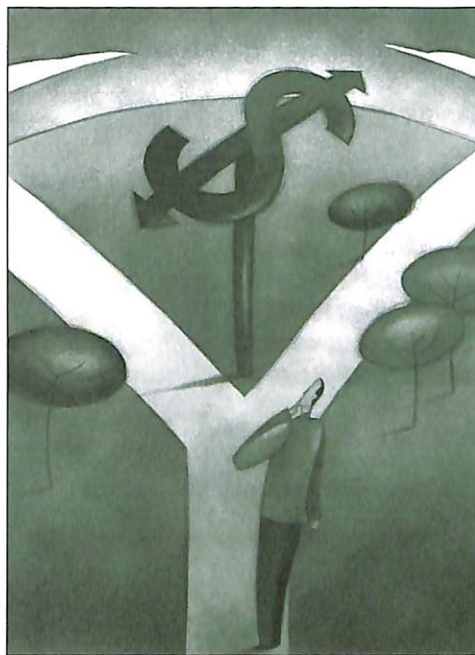
I realize that this vision probably won't happen, and that's a shame. Those who choose not to tithe—even though God has instructed us to do so—will miss an upgraded personal relationship with God and the accompanying blessings.

I know some of you will give the excuse, "The Church does not need my money; they already have enough." Others of you will say, "God doesn't need money. What would He do with it?"

These reasons are the great "cop-outs."

Of course, God doesn't need your money! However, those who are in true need *do* need our help, and this includes financial support. If it were simply left up to us as individuals, we would do little or nothing to identify these people or help them in their time of need.

My "ideal" church would also tithe by taking 10 percent of their annual budget and commit to giving to other causes outside the emphasis of their



local body. This tithe might be designated as a ministry gift to the SDB General Conference, or to one of our denominational Boards or Agencies, or to a humanitarian cause such as Samaritan's Purse or the Salvation Army.

The church tithe could be distributed to many great Christian causes around the world. Your church's efforts should create new ministry opportunities that benefit many who come in contact with it.

I also have a challenge for each of you personally: I would like those of you who have not given in this way to take the *Next Step* in tithing.

If you will commit to tithe for only

a three-month period, it will give you the chance to witness firsthand the gift of tithing. And, yes, it is a gift. God gave it to us, and we are to pass His gifts along to others.

You can hear all the tithing testimonies "until the cows come home," but they will mean nothing to you unless you try tithing for yourself. It is something that you have to experience on your own.

I would like to hear back from you about the changes in your finances and the gifts God blessed you with that you never experienced before. Just to give it a name, I will call this the "90 Day Tithe Program" (90DTP).

As this concept is applied, it can literally take the local church, our Conference, and the world and let them work in harmony, as God intended them to.

Giving:

- creates human dignity
- opens up possibilities
- miraculously changes lives
- works at our very soul and radiates outward to every area of our lives.

As we show the world that Seventh Day Baptists are truly a Next Step People, let's take the next **bold** step in our walk with God. Let's be a Next Step People who obey God's desires for our lives by being those who help others through our tithes. **SR**

Chicken 'n Biscuits = \$7,000

by Pat Cruzan

The Senior High Youth Group of the Shiloh, N.J., Seventh Day Baptist Church wanted to do something to aid the victims of Hurricane Katrina. They brainstormed and decided to serve a Chicken 'n Biscuit dinner.

Within one hour, they made all of the posters and came up with the menu. Twenty-four hours later, Barbara Davis—Shiloh's famous biscuit-maker—offered her skills to help with the project. Before long, the entire church community was working together to make this event happen.

About 750 biscuits and 375 dinners later, the meal showed a profit of \$3,178. But that's not the end of the story.

The Shiloh church has a fund called the William Lupton Fund for Needy Children. Enough was contributed from this account to raise the total to \$6,000.

When the church voted to help with hurricane relief by adding \$1,000 from the Missionary Fund, the Katrina drive reached a grand total of \$7,000. All of this was made possible by everyone working together to share God's love with others. But that's *still* not the end of the story.

The Youth Group wanted to give this money to an organization that would give *all* of the funds directly to the victims without subtracting any "administrative costs."

After learning of a telethon, "Heart to Heart... Hand in Hand," on a local radio station—and hearing a Baton Rouge, La., preacher talk about the desperate need for nebulizers and hospital-quality masks—the young people knew they had found a real need to fill. Many of the hurricane victims are suffering from severe asthma and the side effects of mold.

One of the largest donations during the telethon came from the Shiloh Youth Group. Some of the



Shiloh SDB Senior High Youth workers at Chicken 'n Biscuit fund raiser.



Lauren, Ariel, and Kelsy DuBois, along with Matt Layton, present the Shiloh Youth Group's check for Hurricane Relief to co-chairmen Greg Hennis (l.) and Richard Meyers (r.).

One of the largest donations during the telethon came from the Shiloh Youth Group.


young people went to Quinn Broadcasting with their check for \$7,000 and had their TV debut!

"It was our way of showing the victims that God loves them and that we're here to help," Ariel DuBois said.

Everyone at the telethon was thrilled with the donation. In fact, Pastor Don Chroniger of the Shiloh church received a letter from the

"Heart to Heart" organization. It said, in part:

"What a blessing your Youth Group was to our telethon. Their effort astonished all of us involved with this relief effort. Their diligence and faithfulness in helping raise these kind of funds was truly an example of the 'love of God' that resides in them.

"Words cannot express how proud we are of them. I know you are as proud of them as we are! They are truly an inspiration of what a Christian should act like in this world... and more so, what the young people of today are capable of doing when they put their hearts into something. So often we hear only the bad things about youth. Today, we heard some great things. We are again reminded that they are truly the 'hope' of tomorrow for our great nation." 

Department Index for 2005

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New members

Montrose, CA
(Foothill Community)
Scott Hausrath, pastor
 Joined after baptism
 Joy Perez
 Joined after testimony
 Jason Jacobs

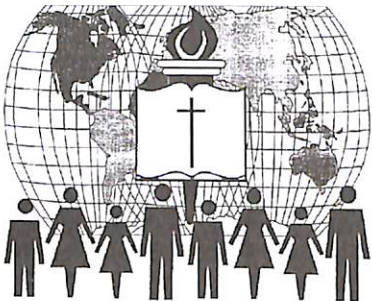
Ronda Jacobs
 John Verser

Paint Rock, AL
John D. Bevis, pastor
 Joined after baptism
 Nathan Bryn Butler
 Joined after testimony
 Glen Harris

Correction

Last month, we reported on a medical mission to Jamaica for 2006. The proposed dates (June 2 to July 2) were incorrect. The dates should be June 23 to July 2. We apologize for the error.

Seventh Day Baptist Week of Prayer



January 1-7
 — 2006 —

The annual prayer booklets, sponsored by the SDB World Federation, have been sent to each church and Conference. This year's author is Pastor ~~Er~~ Caesar, a vice president of the Seventh Day Baptist World Federation from ~~Gu~~yana, South ~~A~~frica.

We invite all of our brothers and sisters to join in prayer that first week of January. ~~Ad~~ on Sabbath, ~~January 7~~ encourage you to take a special offering for the World Federation. Details ~~ill~~ be sent to your church.

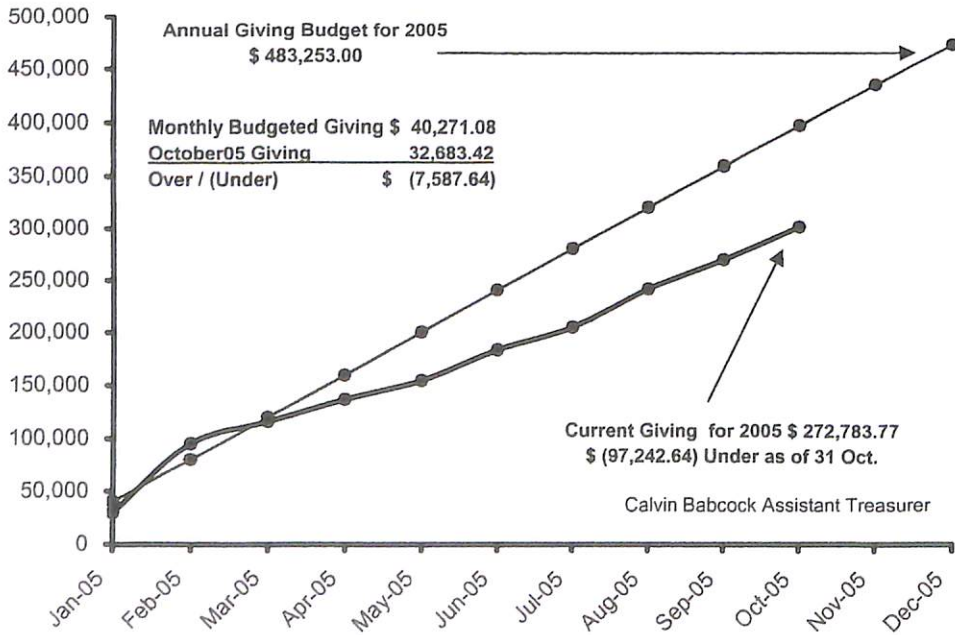
Dear SR Correspondents,

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.

Current Giving 2005



Obituaries

Van Horn.—Rowena Elizabeth Randolph Van Horn, 90, of Columbus, Ohio, went to be with her Lord on July 22, 2005, at the Arbors East Nursing Facility in Columbus.

She was born on May 22, 1915, the daughter of Jesse Alexander and Flora Belle Randolph in Salem, W.Va. A graduate of Salem



College, she married Delmer E. Van Horn on August 7, 1935, at her mother's home in Salem. Pastor Van Horn died in January of 1981.

Rowena was a lifelong member of the Seventh Day Baptist denomination. She filled many roles during her lifetime, including school teacher, homemaker, pastor's wife, cook extraordinaire, seamstress, crocheter, Baptist World Alliance secretary, library assistant, SDB Women's Board member, and church secretary.

As a pastor's wife, she served with her husband at SDB churches in Little Genesee and Adams Center, N.Y.; Hebron, Pa.; Washington, D.C.; and Lost Creek, W.Va.

She served on camp staff in whatever capacity was needed at Camp Harmony for the Central New York Association, and at Camp Joy for the Appalachian Association.

Rowena loved the Lord and her family. She received great joy in seeing each descendant grow in Christ and serve him. She delighted in reaching the age of 90, and enjoyed reading her many birthday cards and letters over and over again. She remarked

that the Lord had given her a full and varied life, in spite of being "a simple country girl."

Rowena continued to the end with dignity, always concerned for the welfare of others. She had great love for everyone who visited and served her in the nursing home.

Survivors include two daughters, Wanda Hughes of Sharon, Mass., and Linda Camenga of Beenleigh, Queensland, Australia; three sons, Arnold of Eagle River, Ark., Darwin of Centerburg, Ohio, and Pastor Robert Van Horn of Reynoldsburg, Ohio; 11 grandchildren, and 12 great-grandchildren. In addition to her husband, she was preceded in death by one sister, Eula Post; two brothers, Floris and Warren Randolph; and one grandson, Mark Hughes.

Services were held on July 26, 2005, at the Greathouse Funeral Home in Salem. A memorial service was held on July 30, 2005, at the SDB Church in Pataskala, Ohio.

Mendes.—Juanita Bessie (Carson) Mendes, 75, of Los Angeles, Calif., died peacefully on October 13, 2005, at Downey Care Center in Downey, Calif.

She was born on July 15, 1930, in Los Angeles, the daughter of Odell and Esther (Davis) Carson. She graduated from Polytechnic High School in 1948. In 1963, she married Gregory O. Mendes, who died in 1995.

Juanita wanted to raise children, but none were born to her after many unsuccessful pregnancies. She did take great joy in the rest of her family, and was a loyal wife, daughter, sister, and a favorite aunt. For 40 years, she was the family's hostess for every holiday dinner, also faithfully hosting Sabbath lunches during much of that time.

When her elderly mother could no longer care for herself, Juanita brought her into her home and cared for her.

Juanita also enjoyed her church. She was part of Seventh Day Baptist congregations for over 70 years, most recently a member of the Foothill Community SDB Church in Montrose, Calif. She confirmed her faith in Jesus Christ by being baptized at age 31.

Juanita was a gifted artist, focusing on drawing and painting. She was an award-winning member of the Beverly Hills (Calif.) Art Club, and produced large murals for churches. She also did portraits for individuals and graphic artwork for businesses.

She leaves behind her mother, Esther Lewis, age 96; one sister, Estelle Abbebe; one brother, Jonathan Lewis; two stepdaughters, Joy Lynn ("Jackie") and Judy; nieces and nephews, and many grandnieces and grandnephews.

Funeral services were held on October 19, 2005, at the Inglewood (Calif.) Cemetery Chapel. Her nephew, Pastor Charlton Davis, and Pastor Scott Hausrath officiated. Burial was in the Inglewood Park Cemetery.

Vance.—Joyce Vance, 72, of New Hope, Ala., died on November 5, 2005.

She was born on November 1, 1933, and was a member of the Paint Rock, Ala., Seventh Day Baptist Church.

Survivors include one daughter, Teresa Whisenant; two sons, Larry and Randy Blythe; and three grandchildren.

The funeral service was held on November 7 at the New Hope Funeral Home, with Pastor John D. Bevis officiating. Burial was in Morris Cemetery.

Pastor, missionary, and computer pioneer passes

John Amandus Conrod, 65, of Denver, Colo., died on August 7, 2005, at the Lutheran Medical Center in Wheatridge, Colo., from complications of Multiple Sclerosis.

He was born on January 26, 1940, in Chicago, Ill., the son of James and Frieda (Steffens) Conrod. He graduated from Lane Technical High School in Chicago, and earned a BA in Business Administration at Seattle (Wash.) Pacific College in 1961. In 1969, he earned a Master of Divinity degree from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pa.

On September 2, 1961, he married Joyce Lee Day in Renton, Wash.

John pastored Seventh Day Baptist churches in Chicago; Kansas City, Mo.; Washington, D.C.; Salemville, Pa.; Marlboro, N.J.; and Denver, Colo. He also served the Hemet (Calif.) SDB Fellowship.

He and his family enjoyed serving as SDB missionaries in Malawi, Africa, from 1969 to 1972. Upon returning to the U.S., he served the Pacific Coast Association as Field Pastor from 1972-74.

In addition to his pastoral



*Rev. John A. Conrod
1940 - 2005*

duties, John served on several denomination boards and committees, including the Tract Society and COSAR, lending his expertise in accounting matters. Several times, he filled in as temporary editor of *The Helping Hand*.

John also contributed several tracts, including, "It Is Your Decision," later translated for use in Malawi, and "A Hole in Your Heart," a children's Gospel tract. He developed and published "Guide to Bible Understand-

ing," a study of the SDB Covenant.

Because of his children's early interest in computers, he co-authored two books entitled, "Computer Bible Games."

Pastor Conrod founded New Covenant Ministries, enabling him to serve various churches on a part-time basis, and the Mid-Continent Association of SDBs in evangelistic outreach on the Internet.

He edited an Internet newsletter list for 10 years that had up to 300 subscribers at times. He also served in many capacities for the Bible Sabbath Association.

John leaves behind his wife, Joyce, of Lakewood, Colo; two sons, Michael of Lakewood and Philip of Maple Valley, Wash.; two brothers, one sister, four grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

A memorial service was held at the Denver SDB Church on August 10, 2005, with his brother, Rev. James Conrod, officiating. Sons Michael offered music, while Philip delivered the eulogy. Other family members gave testimonies on how John influenced their lives. **SR**

A wife remembers

by Joyce Conrod

Many *Recorder* readers will remember John as a Seventh Day Baptist pastor, missionary, and *Helping Hand* contributor.

He also maintained about 90 websites for SDB churches in the forministries.com network.

As John became more and more isolated by his Multiple Sclerosis, he expanded his acquaintances in secular areas. This was dramatically brought home to me at his memorial service and later as the sympathy cards and e-mails rolled in.

About 20 of the people attending the memorial service knew John outside of the Seventh Day Baptist context. Here are a few of the comments

that I received on John's behalf.

•*His doctor of 25 years:* "He [John] was very realistic about his condition. He didn't chase rainbows but dealt in practical ways with the problems caused by MS."

•*A visiting nurse:* "It was nice to be able to discuss Christian concerns with a patient who was interested in the world outside his situation."

•*A member of the YMCA:* "John's determination to do something no matter how physically difficult inspired many of us to keep on moving, even when the circumstances seemed to be against it."

•*A staff member of the YMCA:* "John encouraged me to continue my

witness for Christ by being a good example as an employee. He also challenged my knowledge of the Bible and encouraged more Bible study."

•*A neighbor:* "It was good to see that family life could continue even with a nursing home situation."

•*A fellow MS friend:* "His daily joke was a way for us to share the gift of laughter."

•*A fellow Internet correspondent:* "I wept when I heard of his death."

These are a few of the everyday facets that represented John's earthly life.

•*Joyce Conrod:* "He was my best friend." **SR**

KEVIN'S

ORNER

A story to tell, a life to live

I just returned from one of the last parent/teacher conferences that Janet and I will have to attend.

Jackson, our “baby” (all 6-foot 3-inches of him), is a high school junior. He’s driving himself to classes, gaining more independence, expanding his musical skills, increasing in confidence, and generally growing up before our eyes.

With three siblings preceding him at Janesville’s Craig High School, we’ve seen some of the same teachers at these semi-annual conferences every year

since 1995.

We’re always proud to hear how our students favorably impressed their teachers and fellow classmates.

It’s fun to have their instructors tell us, “You’ve done a good job.” “She’s a keeper!” “I’d love to have several more of him in my class.” “Oh, she is such a sweetheart!” “A positive influence on the other students.” “Can I take him home with me?” (With this last question—after considering the food, laundry, and gas bills—I almost reply, “Would you, please?”)

The Lord has blessed us with great offspring.

As the kids move out and move on (Matt’s getting married on New Year’s day!), I rejoice in knowing that they are well-adjusted and well-educated young people. But I have to ask myself a few questions:

How did we do in passing on our faith?

Did we clearly convey the most important value?

I can truly appreciate the comment in Rowena Van Horn’s obituary (on p. 25), “She received great joy in seeing each descendant grow in Christ and serve him.”

I know that each one of our kids has made a commitment to Christ and are striving to walk with their Lord. Do their choices and lifestyles always reflect that? Do mine??

I may write for a Christian publication, and preach behind a pulpit, but that doesn’t make me the best example to follow. How is my *living* testimony?

How about a commitment to the Sabbath? Will it be a priority for our children? Or will they say, “Oh yeah, that’s the day Dad goes to church and then comes home to take a nap...”

I wonder what kind of “parent/Great Teacher conference” will happen at the end of their days? My prayer is that they will hear things like: “You’ve done a good job.” “You’re a keeper!” “I’d love to have several more of you in My Heaven.” “Can I take you Home with Me?”



SDB Grapevine—Do You Want to Know?

We have joked about the “SDB Grapevine” over the years. It was a tool to get news out quickly. Today, it may not be the most efficient way to communicate what is going on within your General Conference. You might get news, but not always the correct facts.

How would you like to receive “cutting edge” ministry news as it is developing? If you would like to receive a new monthly E-Newsletter from the Center offices, please send your e-mail to robappel@seventhdaybaptist.org. You will become an “insider” on SDB news happening today!

—Executive Director Rob Appel



Important Memo:

To: Friends of
The Sabbath Recorder
From: Editor Kevin Butler

DID YOU KNOW THAT THE SABBATH RECORDER IS FUNDED BY YOUR GIFTS? YOUR DONATION TO THE SABBATH RECORDER IS PART OF THE TOTAL SDB DENOMINATIONAL BUDGET.

I HOPE THAT YOU HAVE BEEN ENJOYING THE MAGAZINE DURING THIS PAST YEAR AND WILL BE ABLE TO MAKE A TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION TO THIS PART OF OUR SEVENTH DAY BAPTIST CONNECTION AND OUTREACH. MAY GOD BLESS YOU AND THANK YOU.

GRACE AND PEACE,

Kevin

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