



The
Sabbath
RECORDER

March 2005

News for and about Seventh Day Baptists

The Cost of
**Faith and
Freedom**





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

Summer Institute on Sabbath Theology

May 30 –
June 10, 2005

Seventh Day Baptist Center
Janesville, Wis.

Taught by
Gordon Lawton

Please contact Rev. Lawton
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(608) 752-5055
com@sdbministry.org

Historical Society Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Seventh Day Baptist Historical Society will be held at the SDB Center in Janesville, Wis., on Sunday, May 15, 2005, at 2:00 p.m. in connection with the Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors.

The Society serves the denomination in the collection, preservation, and communication of SDB history. As a membership corporation, its work is financed by membership dues, endowments, contributions, and the sale of its books.

Any member of a Seventh Day Baptist church may become a Contributing Member for a \$10 annual fee, or a Life Member for \$100, payable to the Historical Society at the SDB Center, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547.

Pastors' Conference

April 19-23, 2005



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

Come join the CAST! (Contact and Support Team)

The first *CAST Training Seminar* will be held May 13-15, 2005, at the Faith Training Center in Doniphan, Mo.

For an application, contact the Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society, 119 Main St., Westerly, RI 02891.

Phone: (401) 596-4326; **E-mail:** sdbmissoc@verizon.net





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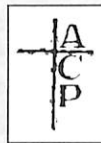


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Features

- Are the best things in life really free? 4**
by Bonnie Severance
The Church. The Sabbath. Are we prepared to stand up for what we believe?
- The mission field of Army Chaplaincy 6**
by Captain Jerry Johnson
"Transitions galore" greet an SDB pastor and family as he trains to serve as a military chaplain.
- Away from home—Away from the Sabbath? 8**
by Katie Myers
Being far from home—and in the military—presents many challenges to a young couple.
- Senators hear God's voice 9**
by Kevin Butler
A former SDB pastor gets to pray for our nation's legislators at a crucial time.
- Profile of a soldier 10**
An e-mail challenges us to picture, and pray for, our armed forces.
- Exploring the Sabbath 11**
by Linda Greene
A last look at Old Testament Sabbath passages.

Departments

- | | |
|---|--|
| Single Minded 12
<i>Sleep in heavenly peace</i> | Reflections 19
<i>Flying towards the Light</i> |
| Women's Society 13
<i>Brooms for sale</i> | President's Page 20
<i>A vase of good intentions</i> |
| Pearls from the Past 14
<i>Sabbath promotion in ecumenism</i> | Vision 2020 21
<i>Invite, include, and involve</i> |
| Christian Education 16
<i>Strong, steady in memorizing</i> | Local news 22
<i>NABF</i> 22 |
| Focus 17
<i>Property improved in Guyana</i> | Family flux 24-25
<i>New members, marriages</i> 24
<i>Obituaries, births</i> 25 |
| The Beacon 18
<i>The Rumor Mill</i> | Kevin's Korner 27
<i>Don't judge too quickly</i> |

Are the best things in life really free?

by Bonnie Severance

The best things in life might be free, but they are not always appreciated or treated with respect.

It seems to me that is what's happening to the Sabbath. It was given to us freely and without charge, yet it is losing its importance.

The "one true Church"?

For centuries, the Roman Catholic Church was the "law of the land." But there were always those who questioned the Church and what it believed.

Out of this was born the search for the right to believe what you believe is right. Out of this was born the Reformation. Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli escaped from the Church, but it could be argued that these men established churches similar to the one from which they had fled.

Anabaptists

One of these early new groups was called the Anabaptists. They recognized that the New Testament Church was composed of individual congregations that were established not by conquest, but by persuasion and testimony.

The term "Anabaptist" means "Rebaptized." The 16th century Anabaptists did not consider that they were rebaptized because they considered true baptism possible only on belief and confession.

In 1526, the Council in Zurich, Switzerland, decreed that anyone found rebaptized would be put to death by drowning. "If heretics want water, let them have it."

Rediscovery, application, and martyrdom

Many of the people who helped establish the Seventh Day Baptist

Are we strong enough as a Church to survive this, if it happens again in America?

Church were found in England. Each stage of the Reformation was marked by the rediscovery of the Bible and its application to Christian belief.

Sometimes the attempt to silence Scriptural teaching ended in martyrdom. John Rogers was burned at the stake during the reign of Queen Mary. That act failed to weaken the movement, and Bishops Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley were also led to the stake.

Latimer reportedly said, "Be of good comfort, Mr. Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace in England, as I trust will never be put out."

Could *you* have been so positive?

John James, Sabbathkeeper

Another example of martyrdom was John James, a suspected member of the Fifth-Monarchy men. King Charles told his people that those under the name of Fifth-Monarchy men held principles that were "both dangerous and pernicious." John James, a silk weaver by trade, was a pastor of a Sabbath-keeping Baptist church.

James was arrested while preaching one Sabbath in October 1661. Found guilty at his trial, James was hanged and quartered. His body parts were placed at strategic spots in the city as a warning to others.

Do *your* beliefs mean that much to you?*

SDBs in the New World

Seventh Day Baptists slowly emerged in the New World in the 17th century, but they still found it difficult to worship on the Sabbath.

In 1651, three men from Newport, R.I.—John Clarke, Obadiah Holmes, and John Crandall—went to Massachusetts to minister and serve communion to a blind Baptist named William Witter. All three were fined for their actions and sent to prison until the fines were paid. (The alternative to paying the fines was to be "well whipped.")

Friends paid the fine for Clarke, and he was released. Crandall was allowed to return home to raise money for his fee. Holmes, however, refused to pay or let others do it for him. At the whipping post, 30 lashes were laid upon him while he continued in prayer and testimony.

Would the Sabbath Day be important enough to *you* to take 30 lashes?

The Cloister at Ephrata

The German SDB Cloister at Ephrata, Pa., established before the Revolutionary War, found itself in the midst of the battle even though they refused, along with John Horn, to bear arms. Horn was an SDB minister who wished to be freed from



*"John James Hurried to Execution." An undated line-cut drawing from a special issue of *The Sabbath Observer*, a quarterly published by the Mill Yard SDB Church in London.*

*Don Sanford, in his book *A Choosing People*, writes this about John James:

"In his final speech beneath the gallows he defended his heritage as an Englishman, though he left no doubt that his ultimate loyalty was to God. In speaking of his beliefs, he acknowledged that he was a baptized believer who accepted the principles in Hebrews 6:1-2 and such doctrines as faith in God, repentance from dead works, baptism, laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment, ending with the affirmation that he owned the Commandments of God, the Ten Commandments as expressed in Exodus 20, and did not dare willingly to break the least of those to save his life. He also declared, 'I do own the Lord's holy Sabbath, the seventh day of the week to be the Lord's Sabbath.'

"John James was not martyred for his Sabbath convictions. However, his willingness to stand firm and the forgiving nature which he displayed towards those who persecuted him are traits which others bearing the name Seventh Day Baptist have held in varying degree."

his obligation to fight in the war. Benjamin Franklin presided over the council that decided Horn's fate. The council concluded:

"It is the opinion of the Council that John Horn be exempt by law from military service, and that he be released from that which has been imposed upon him."

The reputation of the Cloister was sufficiently known that, following the Battle of Brandywine in 1777, General George Washington had his wounded men transported to Ephrata, where 150 of the 500 died of their wounds and other diseases.

The Cloister never fully recovered from the losses sustained in personnel, supplies, and facilities.

Persecution in early America

Two SDB churches—one in Piscataway, N.J., and the other in Newport, R.I.—suffered devastating effects from the British occupation. In Piscataway, houses were pillaged, many homes and barns were burned, and countless tales of horror were told. Soldiers "warred upon decrepit aged and defenseless youth, plundered friends and foes, destroyed public records and private monuments, and violated the chastity of women."

Many of the churches in Newport were used for quartering soldiers and stabling horses. The local Seventh Day Baptist church was spared, perhaps because of the two tables of the Ten Commandments on its walls.

Are we strong enough as a Church to survive this, if it happens again in America? **SR**

A nearly lifelong resident of North Loup, Neb., Bonnie Severance is a member of that town's SDB church.

The mission field of Army Chaplaincy

by Chaplain (Captain) Jerry Johnson, U.S. Army

Greetings to everyone from the home of the 10th Mountain Division, Ft. Drum, N.Y., in the heart of the North Country! The last year brought innumerable changes to the Johnson family.

January of 2004 started with tragedy, as I was involved in a traffic fatality while driving a school bus. In the spring, I was accessioned into the United States Army as a chaplain.

The Lord led me to accept a commission into active duty instead of the Reserves. This meant that I had to take the difficult step of resigning from our wonderful church family back in New Auburn, Wis.

Time of training, and separation

Carrie and the boys stayed in New Auburn for much of the sum-



mer, preparing for the move. They came to see me at Chaplains' School both in July and at graduation, yet we were separated for a couple months.

distinct phases: about four weeks of introduction to the military, two dealing with being a staff officer, three spent discussing the specific tasks of a chaplain, and four weeks incorporating everything we had

They taught us how to work with soldiers in traumatic situations, counsel married couples, conduct field and memorial services, budget for religious programs, etc. Upon graduation, we thought we knew it all.

The Chaplain Officer Basic course taught us how to work with soldiers in traumatic situations, counsel married couples, conduct field and memorial services... Upon graduation, we thought we knew it all.

mer, preparing for the move. They came to see me at Chaplains' School both in July and at graduation, yet we were separated for a couple months.

In the summer I attended the Chaplain Officer Basic course at Ft. Jackson in South Carolina. The 13-week program consisted of four

learned into practical military exercises.

Among a multitude of other things, we learned how to march, put on a nice uniform, participate in early morning physical fitness training, survive in a tactical environment, and work in a multi-denominational chapel program.

The family catches up

Our family drove up to Ft. Drum, not knowing quite what to expect. Obviously, the Lord had everything planned.

I began my in-processing on September 7. That very same day, the Army offered us government quarters in Lowville, N.Y., about 22 miles south of the base gate. Many soldiers wait weeks for housing or have to travel as far away as Syracuse (100 miles) to find adequate quarters, especially if they have large families.

Assignments and friendships

The second way the Lord planned things was in my unit assignment. My brigade supervisor originally as-

signed me to a cavalry unit, but less than two days later he switched me to a field artillery unit. I instantly formed a rapport with both my commanding officer and the executive officer.

The commander loves chaplains and gives me total freedom to minister within the battalion as I see fit. My "XO" is a practicing evangelical Christian who sits down with me to pray for our needs. His wife is battling cancer, which has given Carrie a chance to build an immediate friendship.

Everything hasn't been easy. For more than two and a half months, we operated out of temporary quarters and I didn't even have an office. But God has led us each day.

What do I do?

So what does a chaplain do?

I am technically a "special staff officer" within my battalion, working directly for my commander in the areas of morals, morale, and reli-



Jerry and Carrie Johnson and boys at the Chaplain School graduation.

We chaplains are there to "put out the fires" and keep morale high. In the coming months, I will help prepare the families for our upcoming deployment.

gion as they relate to the completion of the mission.

Putting that into English, I conduct spiritual fitness and moral leadership training with the individual units. I am the person people come to for counseling if they have marital difficulties, suicidal thoughts, financial problems, or spiritual struggles.

Last week, I did a funeral for a premature baby who lived only one hour. Then I turned around and officiated at the wedding for a couple I had been counseling.

We chaplains are there to "put out the fires" and keep morale high. As an evangelical, I also have the opportunity to both model and share Christianity with the soldiers.

Helping families and community

In the coming months, I will help prepare the families for our upcoming deployment and give the soldiers a chance to put together their individual fitness plans.

Chaplains are also active on the base, promoting the religious program that is going on within the community.

Carrie attends the weekly Protestant Women of the Chapel Bible Study, as well as many activities with unit wives. I get to lead

prayers at various garrison functions and respond to emergencies taking place in other units.

Carrie and I both get to instruct children weekly. We are fortunate that the overwhelming majority of the people we work alongside of are Bible-believing Christians.

Upcoming plans

Please pray for us in the months ahead. Our unit, the 4-25 Field Artillery Battalion, will be going to the Joint Readiness Training Center at Ft. Polk in Louisiana June 1-26, along with the rest of the newly-formed 3rd Brigade Combat Team.

There they will place us in combat-like scenarios to evaluate our ability to succeed in combat. Chaplains have to know how to survive both tactically and technically to provide the spiritual support that is so necessary in theaters of war.

My commander tells me that our tentative date for deployment is February 2006, probably to Afghanistan for a full year. As that date draws closer, I will provide more information.

Maintaining SDB connections

We will try to stay in touch with local Seventh Day Baptist congregations as time permits. Thank the Lord that we are within an hour's drive of both Adams Center and Verona, N.Y.! (The Army is paying our way to Conference in Michigan this summer.)

I never forget to tell people that I represent the Lord and Seventh Day Baptists. This is a great calling, a wonderful mission field.

We are in a war that transcends all others, both in scope and duration. Uphold our troops who are fighting daily to secure the freedom that makes America so great. **SR**

Away from home— Away from the Sabbath?

by Katie Myers

Mark and Katie (Colvin) Myers serve in the U.S. Navy and are stationed in Norfolk, Va. They are members of the Nortonville, Kan., SDB Church.

★ ★ ★

As a military family, we do not get to choose where we live. This means that we are not close enough to a Seventh Day Baptist church to attend every week.

Keeping the Sabbath has become a challenge for Mark and myself. At times, it seems we are the only two trying to keep God's holy day! We know this is not true, but it definitely feels that way sometimes.

When we first moved away from home, we tried to find a church to fellowship with. We attended a few different Sunday-keeping churches. The very first one we tried we thought would work, despite its size and that it seemed like some of the people there were "faking." After only a few sermons, we knew this pastor was not right for us.


Living in an environment where we are not surrounded by other Sabbathkeepers has been a big challenge.

The same pattern followed with the other churches we tried.

The longer we are away from our home church, the harder it seems to keep the Sabbath. This bothers us very much, so after prayer we decided to start holding Bible studies in our home. We invited some of the other Christian men (and their families) from Mark's ship. This should be a good way for us to remember to keep the Sabbath, and to have fellowship with other believers.

Pastor Steve and Irene Saunders have sent tracts that we pass out (several about the Sabbath) to help us when people start asking questions about our faith.

Living in an environment where we are not surrounded by other Sabbathkeepers has been a big challenge. But the hardest part about being a military Christian family is when Mark and I have to be away from each other. Being so far from our extended family and home church makes this worse. When we *are* apart, life seems to become even more stressful.

We need the Sabbath the most during these times. Yet they can also be the hardest times to keep the Sabbath! The most important thing we can do as a military family is to remember to pray. That's what keeps us going. 

Prayer wheel for our military...

"Lord, hold our troops in Your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need. Amen."

Please stop for a moment and say a prayer for our ground troops in Afghanistan, sailors on ships, airmen in the sky, and for those in Iraq. This can be very powerful.... Of all the gifts you could give a U.S. Soldier, Sailor, Coastguardsman, Marine, or Airman, prayer is the very best one.

The Seventh Day Baptist Peace Fellowship is now a virtual community. For details, go to www.forministry.com/usnjsdbgcspfsp.

If you wondered whatever happened to the newsletter *Peace-Beat*, that is now an on-line feature of this special Web site.

Senators hear God's voice

by Kevin Butler

Two years ago this month, "Operation Iraqi Freedom" saw U.S. and allied troops enter Iraq.

At the same time, a former Seventh Day Baptist pastor entered the Senate chambers in Washington, D.C., to offer prayer for the nation's leaders.

Rev. Glen Warner is an ordained and accredited SDB pastor who retains his membership in the Verona, N.Y., church. He pastored in the Seattle, Wash., and Denver, Colo., SDB churches.

In recent years, besides working as an executive for the Molded Fiberglass Companies, Warner has served the Second Congregational United Church of Christ in


Ashtabula, Ohio. It was from this position that Warner happily accepted an invitation by Ohio Senator George Voinovich to serve as a one-day guest chaplain for the Senate.

Rev. Warner's biggest hope was to provide encouragement and spiritual strength for the lawmakers. When interviewed by the *Ashtabula News-Herald*, he said that he wanted "to help the senators know the living God."

"Christianity is not just a civil religion with no larger meaning," the pastor explained. "There is a living God whom we can know through His Son Jesus Christ, and through the Scriptures."

Material provided before his arrival in Washington explained that all prayers had to be "free from personal political views, from sectarian controversies, and from any intimations pertaining to foreign policy." The prayer also could not exceed 90 seconds.

While not being able to make specific mention of the war in Iraq, Warner acknowledged that "the war was going to be on everybody's mind." He wanted the prayer, based on the 46th Psalm, to exhort the senators to lean on a higher power.

"I want them to hear the voice of God," Warner told *News-Herald* writer Brian Ewig. "That's always a tough thing to discern." 

Praying for the U.S. Senate

This is the prayer that the Rev. Glen Warner of Ashtabula's Second Congregational United Church of Christ delivered to the United States Senate in Washington, D.C.:

Sovereign LORD, Author of liberty, as we gather in this house of strong resolve and mighty decisions, we believe that it must also be a house of prayer for all Nations. We pray that You will be with each of us in these difficult and challenging times.

We stand in Your Presence, in awe of the connection of events that has brought us to this moment in history. Our deepest desire is to "be still and know that You are God." We remember with reverence that Your work is only accomplished by vision and courage. In this moment, we know that we belong to You, Whose glory stretches from age to age. May Your "right hand become glorious in power, justice, and righteousness in all the earth!"

We know that everything here—every light switch, every doorknob, every computer chip, every heart and every brain cell—exists only by Your grace.

In gratitude for these good gifts, we reverence the work You have entrusted to us. We seek the priceless treasure of Your Divine guidance to do it well.

Living God! Your eternal Word tells us, "The LORD is the one who goes before you. He will be with you. He will not leave you... do not fear nor be dismayed" (Deuteronomy 31:8). In trust, we wait, yielded and still, as Your Spirit brushes the souls of our armed forces, and these women and men we have chosen to serve America as our Senators. May they know and accept Your comforting wisdom as they fulfill their ordained purposes for this day.

And all God's people said: "Amen."

Profile of a soldier

This e-mail was forwarded from Dawn Williams Monson, a member of the Nortonville, Kan., SDB Church. Dawn lives in Guam with her husband, who is in the military.

The average age of the U.S. military man is 19 years. He is a shorthaired, tight-muscled kid who, under normal circumstances, is considered by society as half-man, half-boy.

Still thought of as “wet behind the ears,” he’s not old enough to buy beer, but he *is* old enough to die for his country.

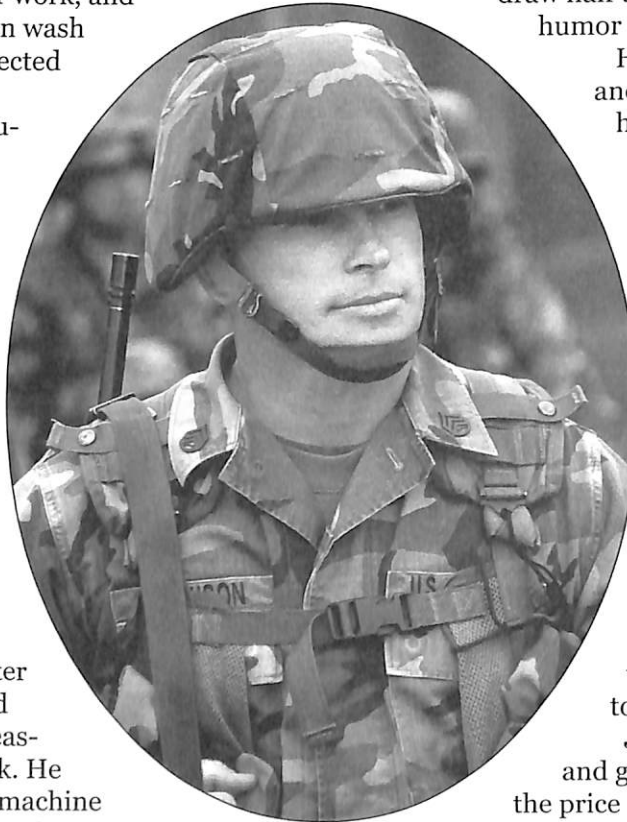
He never really cared much for work, and would rather wax his own car than wash his father’s. But he has never collected unemployment, either.

He’s a recent high school graduate, probably an average student who pursued some form of sports, and he drives a 10-year-old car. He has a steady girlfriend who either broke up with him when he left for the service or swears she’ll be waiting for him when he returns from half-a-world away.

He listens to rock ‘n roll, or hip-hop, or jazz, or swing, and 155mm howitzers. He is 10 or 15 pounds lighter than when he was home because he is working or fighting from before dawn until well after dusk.

He has trouble spelling, so letter writing is a pain, but he can “field strip” a rifle in 30 seconds and reassemble it in less time—in the dark. He can recite the nomenclature of a machine gun or grenade launcher and use either one effectively, if he must. He digs foxholes and latrines and can apply first aid like a professional. He can march until he is told to stop, or stop until he is told to march.

He obeys orders instantly and without hesitation, but he still has spirit and individual dignity. He is self-sufficient. He has two sets of fatigues: he washes one and wears the other. He keeps his canteens full and his feet dry.



He sometimes forgets to brush his teeth but never forgets to clean his rifle. He can cook his own meals, mend his own clothes, and fix his own hurts. If you’re thirsty, he’ll share his water with you; if you’re hungry, he’ll share his food. He’ll even split his ammunition with you when you run low in the midst of battle.

He will often do twice the work of a civilian, draw half the pay, and still find ironic humor in it all.

He has seen more suffering and death than he should have in his short lifetime. He has wept in public—and in private—for friends who have fallen in combat and is not ashamed of his tears.

He feels every note of the National Anthem vibrate through his body as he stands at rigid attention, all the while suppressing a burning desire to “square away” those around him who haven’t bothered to stand, remove their hats, or even stop talking. In an odd twist, day in and day out and far from home, he defends their right to be disrespectful to their country.

Just as his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather did, he is paying the price for our freedom. Beardless or not, he is no longer a boy. He is the American Fighting Man who has kept this country free for over 200 years.

He has asked nothing in return except our friendship and understanding. Remember him (and her) always, for they have earned our respect and admiration with their blood.

As you go to bed tonight, picture our soldiers and offer a prayer. They are praying with you. **SR**

Exploring the Sabbath

by Linda Greene

This month we will look at two interesting Scriptures in Ezekiel, and then next month we will move on to the New Testament.

Ezekiel 20:12-24

Sabbath is a sign between me and God, a sign of our relationship. He is my God, and I belong to Him.

Webster's Dictionary gives several meanings to the word, "sign." The most interesting ones—for the purpose of this study—are: 1) a posted command, warning, or direction; 2) a mark having a conventional meaning and used in place of words or to represent a complex notion; 3) something material or external that stands for or signifies something spiritual; 4) a discernible indication of what is not itself directly perceptible; 5) something indicating the presence or existence of something else; and 6) a motion or gesture by which a thought is expressed or a command or wish is made known.

Aren't these wonderful definitions to bring to the concept of Sabbath?

Keeping Sabbath holy, then, is a weekly, tangible reminder of an invisible God—"something" I can see and touch to remind me of Someone I can't.

Sabbath indicates the presence of God in my life. It reminds me of who God is and who I am: His creation.

Sabbath gets my priorities straight every week, putting things back in their proper perspective. What God does for me—and in me—is of far greater value than anything I could ever do for Him or for myself. For one day of the week, I stop all my "doing" to remind myself of that fact and to focus on *His* "doing."

It's interesting to compare the Sabbath to the other nine commandments.

We are to obey the other nine continually; night and day, seven days a

week, 365 days a year. The Sabbath, however, is something we are asked to obey only one day of the week. The Fourth Commandment is the only one that doesn't directly apply to our lives every day.

My breaking of the other nine commandments might not be obvious to the world in general. They involve fairly internal issues, or at least ones that involve a selected few individuals. But keeping the Sabbath command is a fairly public and conspicuous thing, and the lack of it in my life is readily noticeable to anyone who knows me.

Also, the other nine commandments deal with things that the world sees as virtuous and desirable; at least, the last six do. They are things that people can do for reasons other than a love for God. The world already views these qualities as admirable. So there is no rational explanation for keeping the Sabbath holy except that we have been commanded to do so by our eternal God.

No one would doubt the value of rest, but regarding a day as holy? I think not! It goes too much against the grain of who we are as humans to back off when we have so much to do, or when we have such a "good thing" going for ourselves. Keeping Sabbath definitely goes against everything the world teaches us.

So, does the world invade our Sabbath, or does our Sabbath invade the world, pushing back the darkness?

Ezekiel 46:1-12

As I recall, the vision God gave Ezekiel about this temple was pointing to a future temple of some sort. The dimensions and some of the other details seem to indicate it is probably not referring to the Temple that was rebuilt during Nehemiah's lifetime.

No one was to enter the temple through the east gate. The Lord de-

clared that was where *He* entered. That gate should be closed forever, but on Sabbath its doors were to be opened, and "the prince" was to come into the entrance area, bringing offerings. He (the prince) was then to leave the same way He came in.

The people were also to worship God in that gateway but not enter it.

When the people did enter the temple, they were to enter through a gate other than the east one. And when they left the temple, they were to leave through the gate *opposite* the one they came in. They were *not* to leave by the same gate, and the prince was to enter and leave with them in the same manner.

Now what on earth does all of this mean!? And why am I bringing it up in a Sabbath study?

I have no way of knowing its meaning for sure, but it strikes me that this imagery is very strong and fits well with what we have been learning about the significance of the Sabbath as a symbol of grace and a foreshadowing of Christ.

Let's assume Jesus is the Prince—a fairly safe assumption. When he died on the cross, he entered the Holy Place of God to make offerings and atonement for our sins. He didn't stay there though. He came back out through the "same door" by means of the resurrection.

We worship the Father and Son at the "place" of the cross, but we cannot enter the way he did. Jesus came back out to get us and take us to the Father.

When we do enter, he is with us and among us. We will never again have to leave that most holy place. And we don't have to go back the way we came in. We move right on through the temple and out the other side into the presence and heart of God, to dwell there forever. What a precious truth this little drama represents! **SR**



Single Minded

by Paula Davis

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

Sleep in heavenly peace

"Answer me when I call to you, O righteous God. Give me relief from my distress; be merciful to me and hear my prayer.... Know that the LORD has set apart the godly for himself; the LORD will hear when I call to him. In your anger do not sin; when you are on your beds, search your hearts and be silent. Offer right sacrifices and trust in the LORD.... I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety" (Psalm 4:1, 3-5, 8).

Nighttime can be the hardest part of being single. Maybe that's because we are more tired, often weary after a full day. Perhaps that makes us more vulnerable to emotions or insecurity at night.

The Lord longs to be with us at

those times. He is always waiting to ease our pain and take away the loneliness and fear, even (especially?) in the darkest hour of the night.

In order for Him to do that, we must be silent before Him and empty ourselves of any distractions that may keep us from Him. We must be sure that our hearts and minds are pure and clear of any sin—even the sin of self-pity.

We can't allow our minds to get caught up in the "what-ifs" and "if-onlys." Instead, we must allow God to meet our every need. And He always does.

So often when the hurt seems unbearable, and it feels like we can't go on alone, that's when God's presence is most real. We feel His arms wrapping around us—physically holding and comforting us, easing the pain. Those times give us more



grace and strength to face our next trial without fear.

The Lord promises many things in His Word. One of the most precious is His assurance of security. We can lie down and sleep in peace because He is there with us—easing our fears, relaxing our minds and bodies, providing the rest we need to carry on for Him.

Lord, thank you for keeping Your promises. **SR**

Denominational Dateline

March

- 5 North Loup, Neb., SDB Church—Rob Appel
- 13-17 CUS, Charlotte, N.C.—Andrew Camenga
- 14 Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, Washington, D.C.—Kevin Butler
- 19 Rockville, R.I., SDB Church—Kirk Looper
- 20 Missionary Society, Westerly, R.I.—Looper
- 27 Berlin, N.Y., SDB Church—Looper

April

- 2 Rockville—Looper
- 2 Stewardship Seminar, Battle Creek, Mich.—Camenga
- 9 Salem, W.Va., SDB Church, Ordination Council for D. Scott Smith—Gordon Lawton
- 9 Low Country Church, N. Charleston, S.C.—Appel
- 16-17 Memorial Fund Quarterly Meeting, SDB Center—Morgan Shepard, Appel

- 19-23 SDB Pastors' Conference, Alfred Station, N.Y.—Lawton, Appel, Butler, Camenga, Shepard
- 20 Houghton (N.Y.) College—Appel, Shepard
- 24 Missionary Society Board of Managers Quarterly Meeting, Westerly—Looper, Ron Elston
- 24 BCE Directors meet in Alfred Station—Camenga
- 27 Berlin Seventh Day Baptist Church—Appel
- 28 Alfred Station SDB Church—Appel
- 30 Ashaway, R.I., SDB Church—Looper
- 30 Washington, D.C., SDB Church—Appel

May

- 6-8 Allegheny Association, Toronto, Canada—Appel
- 13-15 CAST Training, Doniphan, Mo.—Elston, Looper
- 14 Kory Geske Ord. Council, Battle Creek—Lawton
- 15 Historical Society Ann. Meeting, SDB Center
- 21 Stonefort, Ill., Annual Homecoming—Elston
- 21 TCC Core Committee, SDB Center—Butler



Brooms for sale (Practicing patience)

Brooms for Sale: Cheap Transportation. The sign in the shop said something like that.

When the "Red Hatter" traveling with me laughingly told me about it, I responded, "My husband would have bought me one yesterday."

I'm not "into" witches, but sometimes "witchy-ness" seems to be in me. It came on me suddenly the other day.

I wanted to walk to the park pool and lie in the sun while I wrote a letter to Rich's sister. (I had put that letter on my "to do" list that morning, along with visiting a hospital patient.) However, Rich woke up with the proposition that we paint porch furniture.

My response was (I'm now quoting from my prayer journal), "I got snappy and angry and ready to 'beat up' my husband, even saying so, because I felt misunderstood... What caused me to flare was his thinking *my* timing should be *his* timing (I rebelled). More, it was that I think he thinks I'm lazy and shirking if I put off a job, like cleaning furniture, until after I finish my other plans.

"I'm glad he didn't seem to mind a lot of my unseemly behavior, but I know I wasn't glorifying You or reflecting Your patience at the moment. *Self. Pride.* The flesh was ruling me. Please forgive me. Thank You for Your patience and the obedience of Your Son, Jesus Christ my Lord."

The "cool" thing about this scenario is that God was setting me up for several lessons on patience, which began the very next day as I read my devotional magazine, *In Touch*, by Charles Stanley.

In response to Ephesians 4:1-3, Dr. Stanley wrote, "Our natural tendency is to shout back when we are wrongly accused. But to demonstrate Christ, we must choose a different path."

Then he shared this checklist:

- Stay quiet when verbally attacked
- Listen without responding
- Pray for whoever is attacking
- Control your thoughts
- Control your emotions
- Be ready to forgive
- Speak encouraging words

In regard to Galatians 5:22-25, Dr. Stanley wrote, "...impatience can cause us to make poor decisions, hurt others, and damage relationships. God wants something far better for us. He knows that patience helps us to stay in His will and in His favor."

It's too bad I didn't let these words sink in a little further. The next morning, my journal entry looked like this: "I'm a rat... I just feel like I failed the first part of the Practicing Patience Test."

But, praise God! In His persistence, the very next day God used Rev. Stanley to sum up these lessons by sharing the rewards of patience:

"1) We see God at work. 2) We can achieve our objectives. 3) We have God's favor."

Brooms for sale?

Actually, if you see one with stiff straw and fanned-out bristles, I'm in the market for one. Rich just threw ours away because it was losing its bristles.

Maybe if I keep working on losing *my* bristles, he'll continue to hand me the car keys (and not suggest a broom) when I need a ride. **SR**

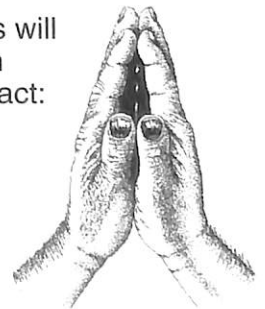


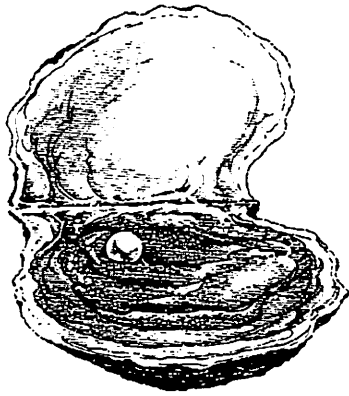
Calling All Prayer Warriors

The 2005 SCSC teams and Project Directors will need our prayers. If you are willing to partner in prayer with someone this summer, please contact:

Jan Graffius
1000 Walker St. #66
Holly Hill, FL 32117

Phone: (386) 258-7367
E-mail: pleg@excite.com





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

Sabbath promotion in ecumenism

Editor's note: Last month, Don Sanford reflected back on his 18 years as denominational historian. He focused on the word "but"—an adversative conjunction that implies agreement in some areas, but a difference in particular ideas or attitudes.

This sums up the position that Seventh Day Baptists hold in Christian circles. We agree with most Protestants (especially Baptists) on many issues, but the seventh-day Sabbath sets us apart.

Don continues his reflections by discussing our interactions in the ecumenical arena.

Early concerns of history, outreach

In 1863, Conference established the Historical Committee, which began collecting pertinent information, including Sabbath material that had been brought from England to the U.S. in 1842.

In 1890, General Conference called for a meeting of leading persons in what became known as the Chicago Council. They assessed, in greater depth, the total program of the denomination.

Rev. A.H. Lewis led The Committee on Sabbath Reform. Beginning in 1882, Rev. Lewis edited and published the periodical, *Outlook and Sabbath Quarterly*. It was directed particularly at teaching the clergy and other leaders who reflected the thought of the day.

The impact of "Outlook"

Fifty-five thousand copies of *Out-*

look were regularly sent to ministers in the United States and Canada. A special issue printed in 1889—dealing with the Blair Sunday Rest Bill proposed by Congress—was sent to 65,000 people.

A Baptist student at Union Theological Seminary, William C. Daland, credits this publication with his acceptance of the Sabbath. Daland later served as president of Milton (Wis.) College, 1902 to 1921.

Lewis was the author of a number of Sabbath books, including *Spiritual Sabbathism*, and *Swift Decadence of Sunday, What Next?*

Rise in ecumenism

Lewis recognized that the Sunday of the Puritans was fast disappearing

of Churches (1938); National Council of Churches (1950); Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs (1960); and The North American Baptist Fellowship (1963).

Compromise or witness?

Some saw this ecumenicity as a compromise, but others saw it as an opportunity for SDBs to witness about the Sabbath.

In 1977, a noted Baptist historian, Winthrop Hudson, wrote:

"It is one of the wonders of history that Seventh Day Baptists have been able to survive at all. Small groups usually do not have a long history—they either grow or die. This is especially true of nonsectarian groups such as the Seventh Day Baptists,

In a meeting of the Federal Council of Churches in 1936, Charles W. MacFarland commented on the influence of Seventh Day Baptists: "They exercise an influence out of proportion to their size."

and was not likely to be reestablished in the culture of the times, making the passing of Sunday laws ineffective.

The dawn of the 20th century saw a rise in the number of ecumenical organizations, both nationally and internationally, and Seventh Day Baptists became involved in varying degrees.

These groups included the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions (1900); Baptist World Alliance (1905); Federal Council of Churches (1908); Bible Defense League (1923); Baptist Bible Union (1924); World Conference on Faith and Order (1927); World Council

who are unwilling to deny the name Christian to those who do not agree with them in all things.

"Reasonable people appealing to reasonable people do not usually have the stamina to maintain their witness and their existence in the midst of a larger society whose members they are not ready to condemn out-of-hand."

One open forum

One example of this Sabbath witness came out of the World Conference on Faith and Order movement in 1917.

The group's upcoming meeting was postponed because of World

War I. In its place, the Conference proposed that each participating denomination prepare a two-fold statement of belief. First, they were to list views that they held in common with other denominations. Secondly, they were to name the views that they held as a sacred trust, "because they seem to justify a separate denominational existence."

This provided Seventh Day Baptists with the opportunity to set before the large ecumenical community the adversative statement, "but we keep the Biblical Sabbath."

Uncommon influence

In a meeting of the Federal Council of Churches in 1936, Charles W. MacFarland commented on the influence of Seventh Day Baptists: "They exercise an influence out of proportion to their size."²

This same recognition was expressed when delegates asked Dean A.J.C. Bond, "How many members do you represent?" Before he could answer, the presiding officer stated, "Seventh Day Baptists weigh more than they count."³

They do notice

In the July 2003 *Baptist Studies Bulletin*, Charles Deweese wrote a brief note on the first Seventh Day Baptist church in America. He began by stating, "Not all Baptists worship on Sunday; Seventh Day Baptists worship on Saturday. They cite the Bible as the basis for their practice."

Deweese then listed 16 Biblical references—five from the Old Testament and 11 from the New Testament. After a short thumbnail sketch of the Newport (R.I.) church, he concluded, "Seventh Day Baptist churches have existed in America for more than 330 years. That is a huge achievement for a minority Baptist tradition. That tradition epitomizes one of the noblest traits of the Baptist experience: the right to read the Bible, reach personal conclusions, and dissent from the norm. December 23, 1671, was a very important day for Baptists at large."⁴

An adversarial position

The November 28, 1996 issue of *Baptists Today* news magazine reported on a meeting of the Lord's Day Alliance where participants received "an upbeat account of how many groups in America are beginning to see anew the value of observing Sunday as a day of rest."

"Whether we agree with Don's biblical interpretations or not, he has every right to hold them. And he just may be more right than some of the rest of us."

**—Jack Harwell,
Baptists Today**

I was surprised when the January 23, 1997 issue of *Baptists Today* reported an adversarial position:

"But at least one group of Baptists was bothered by the article. And they have a right to be. They are the Seventh Day Baptists.

"Their historian is Don A. Sanford of Janesville, Wis. Don has written for *Baptists Today* before. Whether we agree with Don's biblical interpretations or not, he has every right to hold them. And he just may be more right than some of the rest of us. He deserves to be heard, at least. He wrote:

'I have a problem with the use of Sabbath when applied to that which is not the Biblical Sabbath. Both the Old and New Testaments clearly use the Sabbath in reference to the seventh day of the week, not the first.

'Baptists from their beginnings in the early 17th century have been known as a people of the Bible. They have viewed the Ten Commandments as foundational, and neither Jesus nor Paul refuted them....

'One concept that is often missed is the use of the Fourth Commandment as given in Exodus 20:8-11: "Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy." It was God's blessing which made it holy. The Biblical reference to blessing implies a certain finality that cannot be changed.

'The account of Isaac's bestowing his blessing upon Jacob, rather than Esau, is a prime example of this. Once it was pronounced, it could not be revoked and given to another, even though his original intention was to bless Esau.

'The climax of Creation, no matter how it may be interpreted in the context of science, is God-centered and ends with two blessings: God blessed man, and He blessed the Sabbath upon which He rested. This, I believe, is irrevocable and cannot be changed by man nor the Church if we are to remain true to the Bible, as Baptists have claimed.'⁵

I do not expect any great change in the practice of Christian churches, and we SDBs may remain a small minority. Yet, I believe we have a concept of the Sabbath as holy time which other Protestant churches might find helpful in today's desperate search for an answer to the encroachment of secularism. **SR**

¹Winthrop Hudson, "Separate but Not Sectarian," *Willis Russel Lecture, Alfred (NY) University, Feb. 14, 1977, reprinted in The Sabbath Recorder, April 1977, p. 28.*

²*Seventh Day Baptists in Europe and America, Vol. III (Seventh Day Baptist Publishing House, Plainfield, NJ, 1972), p. 93.*

³A.J.C. Bond, shared by Bond in 1950 seminary class at Alfred (NY) University School of Theology.

⁴Charles Deweese, "The Baptist Studies Bulletin, A Monthly Magazine, Bridging Baptists Yesterday and Today," produced by the Center for Baptist Studies, Mercer University, July 2003, Vol. 2, No. 7.

⁵Jack Harwell, *Baptists Today, Vol. 15, No. 2, January 23, 1997.*



Strong, steady in memorizing

Conference President Don Graffius encourages us to obey God's call to be strong, steady, and enthusiastic for the Lord's work. Part of his encouragement is found in the verses of this year's Scripture Memory program. The verses help us remember why we can be strong, steady, and enthusiastic for the work of the Lord. They also allow us to be prepared to give an explanation for the hope that can be found in God's people.

I challenge you to memorize this year's verses. The effort spent to memorize is valuable; it brings us face to face with God's words and forces us to pay attention to what is said and how it is said. In a very real sense, the harder it is for you to memorize Scripture, the more likely you are to ponder it as you work.

Learning the addition and multiplication tables was an early challenge for me in grade school. The teachers put gigantic copies of the tables on the walls in our rooms and read the tables out loud to us. We would read the tables out loud together as a class, and would write the tables out (many times). Teachers showed us how to break the tables into smaller parts and then had us focus on those parts (we learned the "ones" and then the "twos").

Our parents got in on the act by quizzing us at home. The teachers even tricked us into working on memorizing these things by giving us flashcards and turning the repetition into a game. Eventually, they would cover the charts, hide the flash cards, prevent us from talking to others, and test our individual ability to

recall and recite (or write) these tables. It was work, and we learned.

I learned the addition and multiplication tables. In retrospect, I also learned how to memorize. The keys that the teachers showed me were: use as much of yourself as you can; involve other people; review as often as you can; break the material into manageable pieces; and provide ways to test yourself.

Memorizing, especially memorizing Scripture, is not something that you sequester to one small part of your life. The more of your life you are willing to involve in the process, the more you are likely to accomplish this important task. Once you've decided to memorize Scripture, use these keys and hide His Word in your heart.

Use as much of yourself as you can. Look at the verse (use your eyes). Read it out loud (use your voice). Have somebody else read it to you, or record it and play it back (use your ears). Write it out (use your hands). Read the verse in context and paraphrase it (use your brain). Set it to music or draw a picture of it (use your creativity).

Work with someone else one-on-one (read it to each other), or read it together with your Sabbath School class. Discuss what it means and how it helps with life.

Review it as often as you can. Post it where you can see it in your house, your car, your bedroom, your Sabbath School classroom, and other places. Decide to stop and read it aloud the first time you see it each day. Make a card and carry it with you.

Read it as you begin each meal during the day. Read or recite it aloud at the start of each commercial break when you watch TV, at the start of a new chapter when you are reading for fun, at the turn of every page when reading a newspaper or magazine.

Break it down into smaller parts. Find chunks of words that can fit in your mind. Learn the passage a word, a phrase, a clause, or a sentence at a time.

Provide ways to test yourself. With the Scripture Memory Program, one is already built in. On the back of your brochures is a list of the verses with a place for somebody else to initial. Bring the folder to someone you trust and have them test you. They can have the actual words right in front of them as you recite from memory. As you succeed, have them initial the blank lines. In time, all nine spaces will be filled. *SR*

Sabbath School Teacher of the Year

Nominate a Sabbath School teacher from your church to be the 2005 Crystal Apple recipient. We mailed nomination forms to your church. You may obtain additional forms by contacting the Board office at P.O. Box 115, Alfred Station, NY 14803.

We must receive nominations by June 30, 2005. The award will be presented at General Conference in August.



FOCUS
on Missions

Property improved in Guyana

by Kirk Looper

Guyana, in South America, is one of our older SDB Conferences, dating back to the 1940s. At that time Guyana was known as British Guiana.

Our brothers and sisters there have worked hard to develop the churches and ministries that continue today. As they dwell in God's kingdom, His grace has blessed the work of their hands.

To further their work and aid in the development of their Conference, the Missionary Society has decided that the land in Guyana presently owned by the Missionary Society, USA and Canada, should be sold to their Conference. This property is located on Gordon Street, Kitty, Georgetown.

The holdings consist of a manse (used for housing), and a building presently used for church services. This second building is under construction, part of our effort to improve the property for better use. We would encourage them to use it as their Conference office, plus a meeting place for seminars, Conference meetings, training for pastors and other leaders, and church services.



The Kitty SDB Church in Georgetown, Guyana, before and...

In an effort to provide an equitable way to deal with this transfer, it was decided that the Guyana Conference would pay a specific amount of \$90,000 US. This cost was determined by the amount of funds spent in refurbishing and developing the two buildings.

The transaction will include a single payment of \$40,000, with the remainder taken from funds usually set aside for them by the Missionary Society each year. These funds were already designated for the repair and upkeep of the buildings. This would amount to \$5,000 per year for 10 years.

The \$40,000 is due at the end of the second quarter, 2005. This allows them five months to raise these funds. We encourage anyone who wishes to help in this project to send your donations to the Missionary Society. Please state in the memo that it is for the purchase of the Kitty property.



...during construction. The Guyana Conference now owns this building and the adjacent manse.

These funds will be kept separate from the other projects underway in Guyana, such as the camp, church buildings, etc. Transferring the property ownership will be immediate.

A project to repair and refurbish the manse began in the late 1990s. Val Bennett, a member of the Hope Seventh Day Baptist Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (USA), planned and managed the work. Rewiring, plumbing, and developing the building made it conducive to house the pastors of the Kitty Seventh Day Baptist Church. The Conference took one room for its office. A new water supply was added, the outbuildings were improved, as was the drainage for a water shed.

Then, in 2000, a project began to develop the church building into a Conference center. Val Bennett returned to assist in this project. The basement was refurbished into a small chapel; the second floor has seen a new entrance, exit door, and stairs added. The whole building has been rewired and the plumbing is to be completed later this year. Replacing the roof was a great improvement. The construction has been stalled somewhat as we work on the exchange of ownership for the property.

We are anxious to see how owning their own property will enhance the work in Guyana. We pray that they will be able to use the facilities to increase their work and outreach. **SR**



the BEACON

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

March 2005

The Rumor Mill

by Jenn Layton

"Brothers, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against his brother or judges him speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?" (James 4:11-12).

Rumors. One little word. Yet the effect of the word can lead to years of pain and humiliation for those who fall under its wrath.

Yes, we've probably all done it some time or another.

We hear something while walking down a hallway. It might not even be that significant, yet somehow throughout the day we find ourselves telling more and more people about what we heard.

Sometimes we do it without even realizing it. We tell one person, they tell more people, and the "rumor mill" has begun. Usually it doesn't take that long until what you've said has spread through the whole school.

In some cases, the rumors are typical: "Did you hear who's going out now?" "She kissed who?" "Her parents got divorced."

But sometimes the rumors turn into hateful comments: "Did you see what she's wearing?!" "She's so annoying!"

When rumors get passed around so much, something else is almost always added when it goes to a new person. Of course, no one bothers to check with the person, or people, to see if the rumor is true or not. It just keeps spreading like wildfire until it has

completed its path of destruction.

No one has the right to think they are better than anyone else, but there are always a few people like that. No one has the right to talk about anyone behind his or her back, but people do. No one has the right to make someone's life miserable by spreading rumors about them, but people do that, too.

There's going to be people like that no matter where you go—elementary school, high school, college, and the "real" world. *But you don't have to be one.*

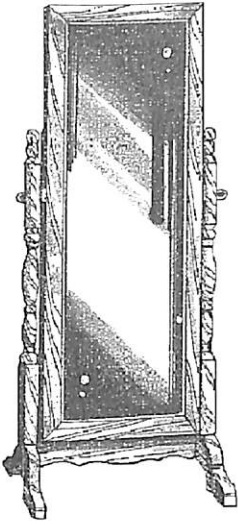
You can choose to do the right thing by not spreading the rumors you hear. You can stand up for the person who is being talked about. You can bring about change.

The next time you hear a rumor, stop for a minute and think. Think about how *you* would feel if the rumor were about you. Think before you do anything and try not to spread the rumor; you might be hurting someone.

Ask yourself WWJD ("What Would Jesus Do?").

As always, thanks for reading! **SR**





Reflections

by Leanne Lippincott

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

Flying towards the Light

When I married into the Lippincott family 35 years ago, I also married into airplanes. With at least 10 pilots in the extended family, flying was—and still is—a vital part of the gene pool.

A bumpy, less-than-enjoyable, hand-me-the-airsickness-bag flight over my childhood home was my one and only flight until I met my future husband.

One evening, Denny took me to the airport at Rochester, Minn., and we climbed aboard a small plane. (We weren't married yet, so I pretended to be Amelia Earhart.) A few moments later, my tall fly-boy—who had gotten his pilot's license at age 16—guided the plane smoothly down the runway.

During the first five minutes of that flight, the myriad of multi-colored city lights shimmering below mesmerized me. They formed intersecting ribbons of rainbows that stretched to the horizon, and the sight was breathtaking. Suddenly, a familiar feeling returned. I had to use every ounce of willpower not to lose my supper before we landed.

It was obvious that flying was not a part of *my* family gene pool. But I loved this man and his large family, and I wanted to "fit in" as much as possible. So I stockpiled airsickness pills like a squirrel collects acorns, and I became a "flyer," albeit reluctantly.

One spring, Denny rented a small plane to fly to Nebraska. Our son

wasn't born yet, so the passenger list consisted of Denny, our young daughter, Jennifer, and me.

Over Iowa, we ran into a storm. With raindrops bombarding our small, metal-framed craft, it sounded like we were inside an aluminum barrel being battered by baseball bats. Bouncing up and down in the shifting air currents, the routine flight suddenly turned terrifying. I literally

***In the blink of an eye,
bone-rattling terror
had been replaced by
an overwhelming
feeling of peace.***

shook as I bear-hugged Jennifer on my lap. I could almost taste my fear.

Denny, calm and collected as usual, deftly maneuvered our plane through what was just a brief shower, and we squirted out of the storm as quickly as we had entered it.

Moving from darkness into light, I'll never forget what I saw next: There, straight ahead, was a huge "circus ring" formed by two towering, arching clouds. The sunlight bathing their cotton candy contours was almost blinding.

After Denny flew our plane directly through the middle of that ring, I wanted to loop around and fly

through it again. In the blink of an eye, bone-rattling terror had been replaced by an overwhelming feeling of peace, awe, beauty, and thankfulness.

I think that's what death will be like for Christians.

I once confided to Pastor Herb Saunders that I was afraid of death. His reply was, "Leanne, most people really don't fear death; they fear dying. They worry about how they'll die. Will it be painful? Will it be a long, drawn-out process?"

Just before leaving this life, there may be an instant or two when we'll literally shake in terror. Fear of the unknown—doubts that we've ignored, or questions we've avoided—may bombard us. But the instant our spirits escape these frail tents and become imperishable, we'll be surrounded by a degree of peace and light and beauty and love that's beyond our comprehension.

In a blink of an eye, our fragile, storm-tossed airplanes will emerge from the darkness and fly toward rings of light that will radiate forever. *SL*





The President's Page
by Don Graffius

A vase of good intentions

Tuesday's theme at General Conference will be "Strong, Steady and Enthusiastic... in Sharing our Faith." We can easily do this by putting love into practice.

Love is most easily expressed through acts of kindness. In Colossians 1:10 we read, "The way you love will always honor and please the Lord, and you will continually do good, kind things for others."

Interestingly, I read in the January/February issue of *Men of Integrity* that in 1940, researchers studied 43 American cities and determined that Rochester, N.Y., was the "kindest" city. Fifty years later, the study was repeated and Rochester finished first again.

According to John Tompkins' research results, published in the *Reader's Digest*, the city's history of kindness and generosity stemmed from a revival in the mid-1800s.

Evangelist Charles Finney spent six months preaching the Gospel and conducting prayer meetings in Rochester. Thousands were converted to Christ. According to Tompkins, believers turned from their selfish ways and began to give themselves to others. A century and a half later, the city has maintained this strong track record.

I recently saw a bumper sticker espousing the philosophy of doing "random acts of kindness." True spirituality, however, is different in that God, through His Holy Spirit,

urges us to look beyond ourselves. In Paul's words, "continually do good, kind things for others."

Rather than "random acts" of kindness, Christians are called to be kind at all times, in all places, to all people. Kind acts, done in the name of Christ, give us the opportunity to share our faith with others.

I often *intend* to do good and kind things, but sometimes have difficulty

someday to ask for his forgiveness so that we might be saved. But somehow, *someday* never comes. We may intend to spend more time in God's Word and in prayer, but our intentions never translate into action.

***Rather than "random acts" of kindness,
Christians are called to be kind at
all times, in all places,
to all people.***

getting around to it. I'm like Peppermint Patty in the "Peanuts" cartoon strip by Charles Schulz: Marcie gives her schoolteacher some flowers, and Peppermint Patty says to the teacher, "I thought about doing the same thing, Ma'am, but I never got around to it. Could you use a vase full of good intentions?"

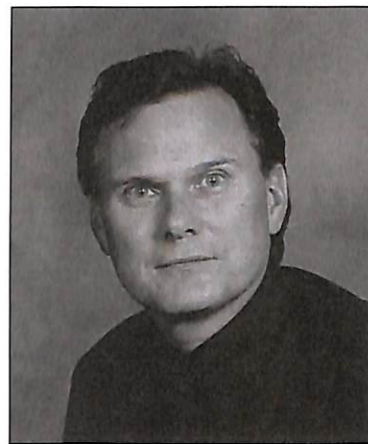
If you are like me, you *intend* to make that phone call to a friend in need, write that letter of encouragement to a loved one, or visit that elderly person in the rest home or hospital. But for whatever reason, we do not make the time.

Similarly, we may know that Christ died for our sins, and intend

As someone once said, "Good intentions are no good until they are put into action." The Apostle James' words are even stronger: "To him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin" (James 4:17).

Is there an act of kindness you need to do today? Write that note or letter. Make that visit. Send those cookies. In the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson, "You cannot do a kindness too soon, for you never know how soon it will be too late."

Besides, as Anne Cetas points out in *Our Daily Bread*, a vase of good intentions never brightened anyone's day! **SR**



by Executive Director
Rob Appel

Invite, include, and involve

In January, we looked at the differences between Belonging vs. Participation. We saw that we are not like the mega-churches that are growing rapidly, based on church “participants.” Rather, we are a people who *belong* and sacrifice and minister to one another and the world.

SDBs are a people who encourage and equip Christians to take the next bold steps in their beliefs, maturity, and ministry. This makes us a “Next Step” people, specializing in calling people to belong—not just participate—in church.

However, we need ministry tools to build the steps toward Christian maturity and a sense of belonging. People don’t belong just by showing up at meeting after meeting. They need to *be invited, included, and involved* in the overall ministry of the church.

Invite

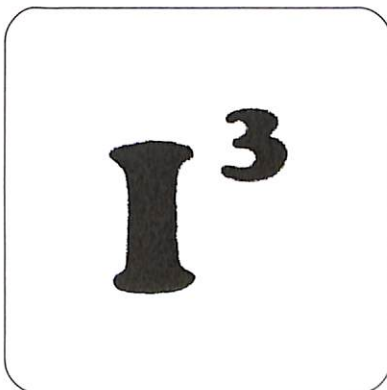
The future growth of SDB churches depends on how we develop and implement new ministry opportunities that will invite new people to our dynamic churches.

The challenge will be to take a “discovery assessment” of future needs of the church and then be creative in meeting those needs.

This means sometimes thinking “outside the box.”

Include

We need to move beyond being just friendly to each other, and become *caring*. This means getting out of our comfort zones to include others in our activities. We must move beyond making people simply part



of our church experience and start making them a part of our lives.

When someone new comes into your church, they are already uncomfortable. They feel self-conscious about trying to include themselves in already established relationships; they feel alienated because they don’t seem to belong. If we don’t take the first bold steps to make them feel a part of our

church community, it would be easy for them not to return.

Involve

We need to involve all the people of the church in our activities to ensure a sense of belonging. This can be done through programs like AWANA, Youth Fellowship, and Community Teen Club, or through a Youth Center, Singles Ministry, Moms in Touch, Prayer Breakfast, Bible Study, Young Adult Cell Group, and Coffee House Ministry at your local coffee shop.

So, what is the first step in our outreach? We must learn to work together as we develop new ministry opportunities.

New programs bring about change, and that means we need to be flexible with each other. New and different ways of worshipping can produce conflict with our traditions. Traditions and history are important, but they should not get in the way of dynamic change!

Change in life is inevitable. Go with the flow and don’t paddle upstream, but don’t compromise your values and beliefs either. **SR**

Next month: Praise Choruses vs. Worship Hymns; New Ways vs. Tradition—Which is Right?

Is there a layman in the house?

NABF Leadership meeting

by Rob Appel, Executive Director

Seventh Day Baptists are a part of the North American Baptist Fellowship (NABF), which is a regional fellowship of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA). There are 14 member bodies of the NABF and about 10 more that are associated but not voting members.

In January, I attended a meeting of North American Baptist leaders to discover and implement how we can work together.

While I sat there listening and participating in the process of discovery, I could not help but think of an old Steelers Wheel song that had the lyrics, “Clowns to the left of me! Jokers to the right! Here I am, stuck in the middle with you.” Except, the lyrics in my mind went more like, “Doctors to the left of me, Doctors to the right. Here I was, stuck in the middle with me!”

There were 20 Doctors of Divinity in the room! Oh yeah, there were also five Reverends. Only three of us were “regular folks.” Woo Hoo! Regular Folks Rock! (But I digress; back to the conference.)

Our goal for the retreat was to formulate and implement a plan of action. The “steps process” was to:

- Gather ideals
- Move beyond ideals to ideas
- Prioritize concrete ideas
- Clarify the best ideas
- Project these ideas for implementation

Dr. George Bullard served as our facilitator and did a wonderful job keeping us focused and working toward the goal of the retreat.

The first assignment George gave us was to break into small groups of



A small group discussed plans at a North American Baptist leadership conference in January. Clockwise from left: Rev. George Harlov, Russian-Ukrainian Baptist Union, USA; Rob Appel, SDB General Conference; Dr. Gary Nelson, Canadian Baptist Ministries; Dr. Dan Vestal, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship; Dr. David Goatley, Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Convention; Rev. Houmphanh Vongsurith, Laotian National Baptist Fellowship; and Bertha Williams, North American Baptist Fellowship.

We all look forward to our next session to build on our common goals as Baptists in North America.

eight and talk about the things that are the most spiritually positive to us, and then come up with seven items to share with the other two groups. The three groups came up with 18 different areas about which we were passionate.


For the second assignment we broke into three groups again, this time with different participants. We were asked to take the 18 items from assignment #1 and narrow them down to the top three to five

things that we would like to see as action areas for the NABF. This list was then narrowed to 11 items to focus on for the next phase.

Assignment #3 was to pick the top three items that we, as individuals, wanted to see the NABF and BWA work on. We then voted by a show of hands.

Not surprisingly, three items from the whole group clearly topped all the others:

- 1) Networking and Resource Sharing;
- 2) Collaborative Ventures Between Member Bodies; and
- 3) Human Rights and Religious Freedom Around the World.

It was a great retreat that had positive outcomes for everyone! We all look forward to our next session to build on our common goals as Baptists in North America. 

More details for Conference

by Judy Parrish

Seventh Day Baptists will gather August 7-13, 2005, at Hope College in Holland, Mich., for our annual General Conference sessions.

Those arriving by air need to fly into Grand Rapids to be transported to Holland by the Host Committee. If arriving by bus or train, come directly to the Holland terminal, where you will be picked up and brought to the campus.

Young Adult Pre-Connors will meet at the college's Wyckoff Hall (#1 on map below), and stay there through Conference. Youth Pre-Con will be at Brook Cherith Camp, about 90 minutes northeast of Holland and just south of White Cloud.

National Youth Fellowship officers at the White Cloud church are busy planning and holding fund-raisers to finance a wide array of activities for Conference week.

The Host Committee plans to help everyone save time by having three registration lines: "Expedited," for those who are pre-registered; "Super Expedited," for those pre-registered

and pre-paid, both in air-conditioned comfort; and a third line for those registering at the campus.

We suggest that everyone pre-register and pre-pay for the easiest and quickest time through the process!

The map shows the convenient locations of all the buildings we will be using. Conference attendees who are not so mobile do not need to worry about getting to various buildings. The Host Committee will furnish courtesy wheelchairs or golf carts (with a driver) to assist everyone needing help to events. We hope that this will benefit our group immensely!

Registration will be at DeWitt Center (#2), the tallest building on campus. Maas Center (3) will be the site of the Women's Banquet and will also house exhibits. The dining room is in Phelps Hall (4), as it was during Conference 1999 at Hope.

Two nurseries—one for infants and one for toddlers—will be downstairs at Phelps Hall. Two dormitory floors with elevator access are also

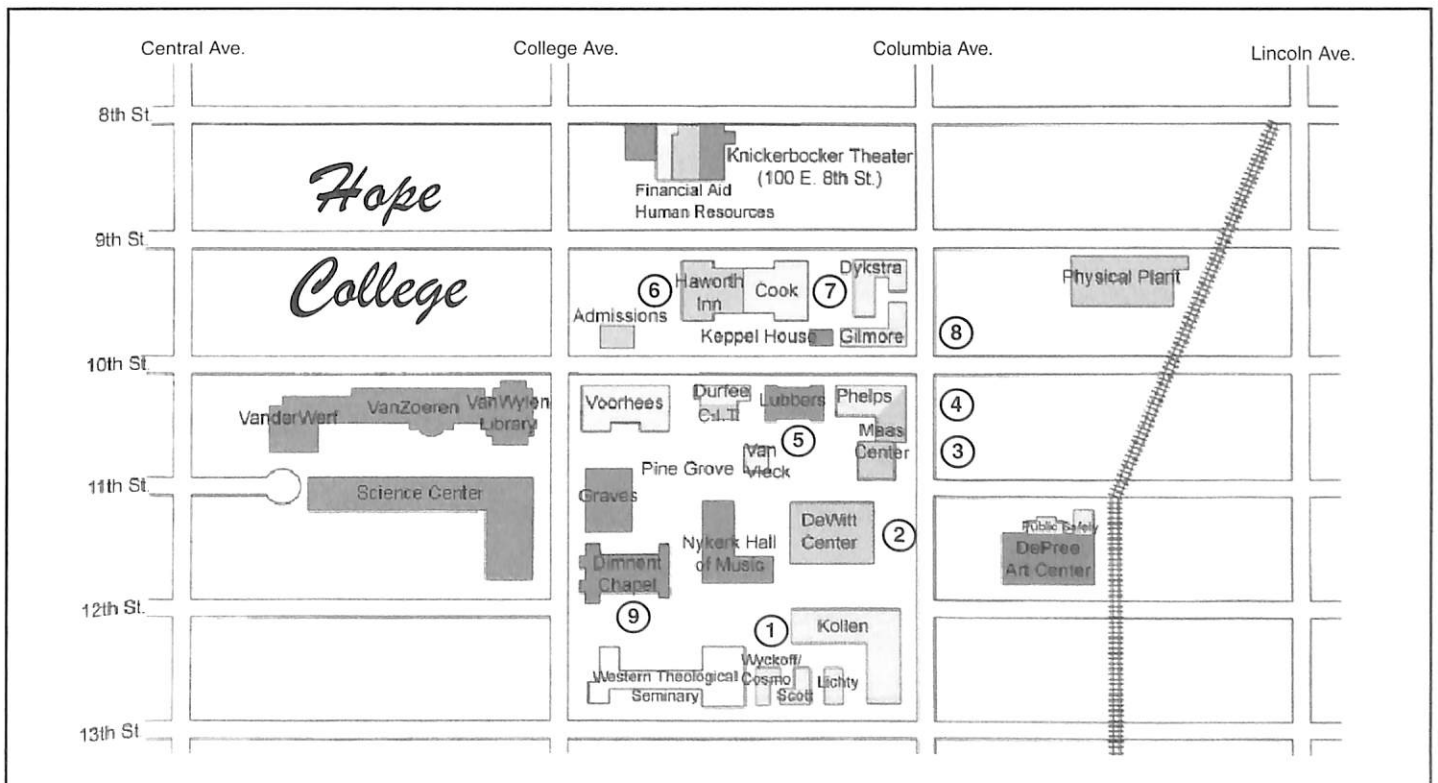
available in Phelps. These rooms have a shared bath per floor.

All Interest Committee meetings will be in Lubbers Hall (5), and business meetings will be in the air-conditioned banquet rooms of the Haworth Inn (6). Hotel-style accommodations, with breakfast included, are also available at the Haworth. Cook Hall (7) joins Haworth and has air-conditioned dorm rooms that share a bath between every two rooms. Gilmore Hall (8) will be the "high tolerance" dorm.

We will hold all evening worship sessions and Sabbath morning worship in Dimnent Chapel (9), with its beautiful stained glass and two organs. An elevator makes the chapel handicap-accessible.

Further housing details, with prices, will be included on the registration pages in the May *SR*.

We Michigan SDBs hope everyone is planning to join us for a wonderful Conference in the Water Wonderland State. We are Enthusiastic, and we are Strong and Steady! *SR*



New members

Battle Creek, MI
Harold King, pastor
 Joined after baptism
 Dereck Griffin
 Christine Paulin

Paint Rock, AL
John D. Bevis, pastor

Joined after testimony
 Steven Dunn
 Zhenya Dunn
 Joan Holder

Montrose, CA (Foothill)
Scott Hausrath, pastor
 Joined after baptism
 Jennifer Cantu
 Sarah Owen
 Joined by letter
 Leland Pike

Verona, NY
Steven James, pastor
 Joined after testimony
 René Armstrong
 Mark Hunt
 Alexandra Huntington-Ofner
 Doreen Marsh
 Tim Marsh
 Donna Rutz

Marriages

Bowen – Luchowski.—Billy A. Bowen Jr. and Laurie A. Luchowski were united in marriage on August 20, 2004, at the Battle Creek, MI, Seventh Day Baptist, with Rev. Gary Wood officiating.

Travers – Creger.—Michael J. Travers and Rebeca M. Creger were united in marriage on November 20, 2004, at the Battle Creek, MI, Seventh Day Baptist Church, with Rev. Harold King officiating.

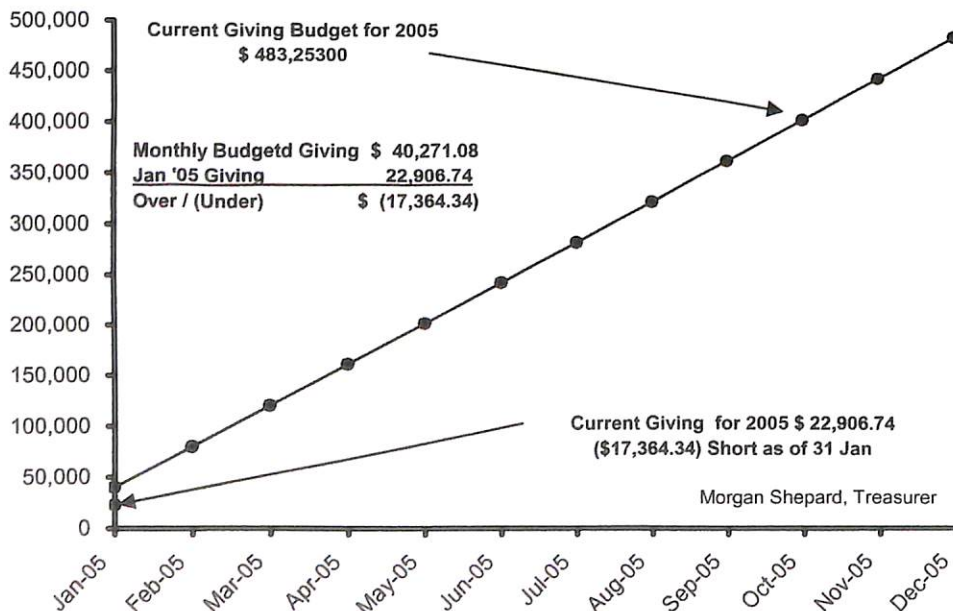
Robinette – Neese.—John Walter Robinette and Esther Olena Neese were married on December 18, 2004, at the Bell Seventh Day Baptist Church in Salemville, PA. Pastor Ed Sutton officiated.

Address or church changes?

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 2005



Making Twice the Difference

Thank you for all you have given. Despite lower than average numbers in January, with the Memorial Fund matching gift, we were able to meet the budget goal. Missions, scholarships, printing tracts and the *SR*, and helping our retired pastors are all ongoing needs that can use your support. Thank you so much!

Obituaries

Spells.—Errol E. Spells, 69, of Augusta, Mich., died at his home on May 4, 2004.

He was born on November 24, 1934, in Battle Creek, Mich., the son of Melbourne and Eloise (Arnold) Spells. He graduated from Lakeview High School in 1952.

Errol lived in the Battle Creek area all of his life and was involved in police work most of that time. He started with the Battle Creek Police in 1956-66, and worked with the Springfield Police from 1967 until retiring in 1986 because of health problems. He served as Police Chief the last five years and had received numerous awards for his valor.

On October 28, 1967, he married Floella Fay Kimbel at the Battle Creek Seventh Day Baptist Church.

In addition to his wife, survivors include three sons, Richard of Battle Creek, Stephen of Hobe Sound, Fla., and Martin Lingg of Vancouver, Canada; four daughters, Pamela Baker and Peggy Rothchild, both of Battle Creek, Kristi Inabnet of Auburn, Wash., and Debra Hall of Augusta; one brother, Ralph W. Leigon;

two sisters, Georgia Miknis of Hickory Corners, Mich., and Marlene Murphy of Homer, Mich.; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Errol was a father figure to many, and a life-member and chairman of the deacons of the Battle Creek Seventh Day Baptist Church. He and his wife enjoyed making many road trips doing evangelical work for the church.

He was a charter member of Lodge #153 F.O.P., and loved working in the yard, doing woodworking, and fishing.

A memorial service was held on May 22, 2004, at the Battle Creek SDB Church, with Pastors Barry Baugh, Dale Smalley, Joe Samuels, and Harold King officiating. Interment was in Memorial Park Cemetery.

Williams.—Orville A. Williams, 85, of Verona, N.Y., died on August 6, 2004, at Rome (N.Y.) Memorial Hospital after a long illness.

He was born on November 13, 1918, in Verona, the son of Irving

and Blanche (Newey) Williams. On August 15, 1942, he was united in marriage to Mary Emma Stillman, who died on February 1, 1992.

Orville retired from the New York State School for the Deaf in 1989. Prior to that, he had been employed at the Kent Company for 21 years.

He was a member of the Verona Seventh Day Baptist Church in the hamlet of Churchville, N.Y., where he served as chairman of the trustees and was a deacon. He was also a co-sexton of New Union Cemetery in Churchville.

Orville was an avid camper and volunteered in many activities.

Survivors include two daughters, Sharon Smith of Westernville, N.Y., and Bonnie Williams of Fort Collins, Colo; three sons, Richard of Verona, Garad of Canastota, N.Y., and Larry of Loveland, Colo.; 12 grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and special nieces, nephews, and friends.

A celebration of Orville's faith was held on August 9, 2004, at the Verona SDB Church, with Pastor Steven James officiating. Burial was in New Union Cemetery.

Births

James.—A daughter, Abigail Shireen James, was born to Keith and Jennifer (Martin) James of New York Mills, NY, on October 10, 2002.

Rini.—A daughter, Faith Savannah Rini, was born to Erik and Pam (Sholtz) Rini of Central Valley, NY, on February 24, 2004.

Noel.—A son, Matthew James Noel, was born to Brad and Brandy Noel of Battle Creek, MI, on March 14, 2004.

Lombardi.—A son, Timothy Virgil Lombardi, was born to Peter and Sandy Lombardi of Verona, NY, on June 27, 2004.

Tien.—A son, Ethan Gerald Tien, was born to Cam and Gayle (Sholtz) Tien of Rome, NY, on August 9, 2004.

Greene.—A son, Samuel Carlton Greene, was born to Carl and Cindy (Dickinson) Greene of Berlin, NY, on October 21, 2004.

Dolge.—A daughter, Abigail Edel Dolge, was born to Brian and Karen (Sholtz) Dolge of Albany, NY, on November 15, 2004.

James.—A son, Braden Christopher James, was born to Keith and Jennifer (Martin) James of New York Mills, NY, on November 16, 2004.

Smith.—A daughter, Kalyn Rose Smith, was born to B.J. and Candice Smith of Battle Creek, MI, on January 1, 2005.

Guyana Mission: Summer 2005

Guyana, South America, Camp Glory Seventh Day Baptist Camp

July 10 – July 21, 2005

Are you ready to live with a purpose this summer?

God is building His Kingdom, and you can be a part of the team.

Join the Washington, D.C., SDB Church and the Mission Team of the White Cloud, Mich., SDB Church as we travel to Guyana and work with the Seventh Day Baptists in their efforts to minister in that part of the world.

Cost: \$1,250 (Transportation included, costs may change depending on airfare)

Application Fee: \$100 (Will be applied to the total cost)

Application Deadline: If you apply before **March 30**, you will receive a \$50 refund! Applications will be taken up until **May 15**; however, obtaining passports and immunizations may require advanced preparations, and airfare costs may increase for late applications.

Description: This project involves completing the construction of the main camp building, and building dormitories for the Conference's summer camping season which begins in August. Those with experience in construction as well as those who have no construction experience are needed. The key prerequisite is an attitude of service and willingness to do whatever is asked with cheerfulness.

Sign Up: E-mail pastornathan@sbcglobal.net or call (616) 447-0319 for more information and an application.

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 Trevah R. Sutton
Kenneth B. Van Horn Edgar E. Wheeler

OTHER RETIREES:

Ida Babcock Margaret S. Bond Mabel Cruzan
Ethel D. Dickinson Clarke Esther Lewis
Beatrice D. Hibbard Jean D. McAllister
Janette Rogers Lila S. Saunders
Rowena R. Van Horn
Ethel M. Wheeler
Jaunita Zwichel

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. **Please note:** This matching program runs through the end of 2005.

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

KEVIN'S

ORNER

Don't judge too quickly

Early February. Sunday evening.

Time to hunker down in the living room, get serious—and watch the Super Bowl!

Actually, it's a chance to make (and consume) some serious snacks, and laugh at the commercials.

A couple of the ads really struck us.

Each showed a guy involved in a series of innocent events that lead up to an embarrassing or tough-to-explain situation. The point? Not to make judgments too quickly.

They reminded me of an old Chinese parable.

A poor farmer and his son were struggling to survive. One day, a beautiful white stallion galloped onto their land and decided to stay. All of the neighbors marveled at the good fortune. "How do you know," the old farmer asked, "if this is good luck?"

The son decided that it was time to "break" the horse to accept a rider. Corralling the animal inside the pen, then climbing the fence, the lad jumped onto his would-be steed. The only "breaking" that occurred was the young man's leg as he landed hard on the ground.

After hearing the news, the neighbors bemoaned the misfortune. But the father simply asked, "How do you know if this is bad luck?"

Soon after, the Emperor declared war on a neighboring country. Not yet recovered from his injury, the young farmer was spared from fighting in a battle that killed most of his friends.

Don't judge too quickly.

In his latest book, Max Lucado quotes a story from Ron Lee Davis' book *Mistreated*:

Over 100 years ago, a group of fishermen were relax-

ing in the dining room of a Scottish seaside inn, trading fish stories.

One of the men gestured widely, depicting the size of a fish that got away. His arm struck the serving maid's tea tray, sending the teapot flying into the whitewashed wall, where its contents left an irregular brown splotch.

The innkeeper surveyed the damage and sighed, "The whole wall will have to be repainted."

"Perhaps not," offered a stranger. "Let me work with it."

Having nothing to lose, the proprietor consented. The man pulled pencils, brushes, some jars of linseed oil, and pigment out of an art box. He sketched around the stains and dabbed shades and colors throughout the splashes of tea.

In time, an image began to emerge: a stag with a great rack of antlers. The man inscribed his signature at the bottom, paid for his meal, and left.

His name: Sir Edwin Landseer, famous painter of wildlife.

In his hands, a "mistake" became a masterpiece.

Seventh Day Baptists remain a minority within Protestant circles. We may be small in numbers, and we may stand out from the world by keeping a "different" day of worship.

But don't judge us too quickly. We might grow on you like a tea stain on a white wall!



SDB Youth Unite for Sri Lankan Youth

Seventh Day Baptist youth from the United States and Canada are uniting to raise funds for SDB youth survivors of the devastating tsunami that hit Sri Lanka.

A letter sent to each church explains the concerns and ideas for raising funds and gaining compassion for these survivors.

Encourage your youth by supporting this project which ends on May 7. You may send your contributions directly to "Youth Missions Project 2005," SDB Missionary Society, 119 Main St., Westerly RI 02891.

Librarian-Historian Job Notice

The Seventh Day Baptist Historical Society is seeking a Librarian-Historian. Major responsibilities of the position include:

- **M**anage the Society's historical library and denominational archives (collections related to the history of Seventh Day Baptists and the Sabbath) at the Seventh Day Baptist Center, Janesville, Wis.
- **M**anage the computerization of the library catalogs and extensive periodical indexes (currently not computerized).
- **E**ngage in historical research and communication of Seventh Day Baptist history and heritage through many media and for a variety of audiences.
- **A**dminister the Society's work, reporting to the president of the Society and its Board of Directors.

Tasks included in the role of librarian include acquisitions, accessioning, cataloging, indexing, and preservation; much reference assistance and question-answering through mail, e-mail, and telephone correspondence. It may also involve employing and supervising part-time or volunteer assistants.

The historian role includes writing and publication, programs and speeches, displays, teaching, and responding to requests from SDB agencies, churches, officers, members, and the general public through visits, correspondence, and professional meetings.

The historian may also be called upon to represent the Society and Seventh Day Baptists in a variety of settings.

The Librarian-Historian's office will be in the Seventh Day Baptist Center in Janesville, Wis. Interested applicants may send a letter of introduction and resumé of education and experience to the president of the SDB Historical Society:

*Janet Thorngate
88 Terrace Ave.
Salem, WV 26426*

Phone: (304) 782-1727

E-mail: djthorn17@aol.com