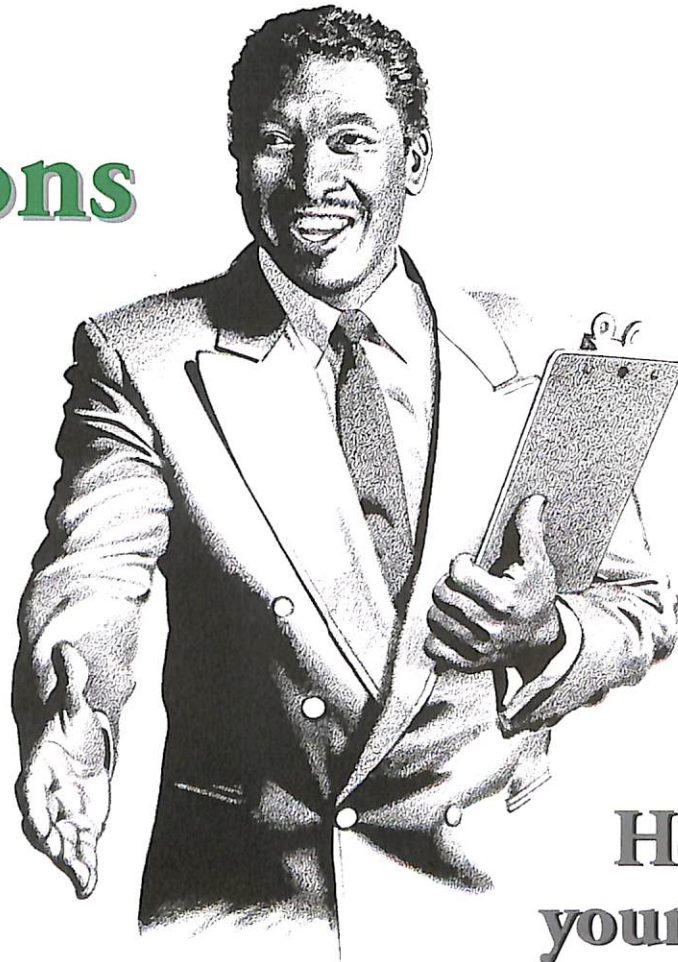


SR The Sabbath RECORDER

July-Aug. 2005

News for and about Seventh Day Baptists

First Impressions



**How does
your church
come across?**



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

Ways to support the ongoing work

Your partnership with the SDB Memorial Fund can help to sustain our many outreach ministries. You will be able to:

- Create a new fund (for scholarships, training, publishing, etc.)

- Start an Annuity
- Leave a gift in your will

Please call (608) 752-5055 for more information, or see Calvin Babcock or any of the Memorial Fund trustees at Conference.



More quilts on the block for SCSC

Over 20 years ago, Rev. Alton and Ethel Wheeler were presented two matching quilts made by members of the Riverside, Calif., church. The family has decided to place the quilts up for auction (at Conference in Michigan), with the proceeds going toward the Summer Christian Service Corps ministry.

Each quilt is 62 x 84 inches. The background material contains green leaves and tiny red flowers. The squares are all unique, created by different church members.

So come to Conference ready to place a bid on these special keepsakes, and help support SCSC!

Rowena says Thank You!



Rowena Van Horn (*seated, middle front*) celebrated her 90th birthday on May 22, 2005, at the new SDB Church in Pataskala, Ohio (near Columbus). She wishes to thank everyone who sent her greetings from all across the Conference. She reads and rereads the cards, enjoying the memories. Blessings and thanks to all!



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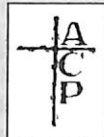


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Educating strong disciples

Or: What an Episcopal Bishop learned from Seventh Day Baptists

by Bishop Kenneth L. Price Jr.

In his address to our recent Diocesan Convention, Bishop Herbert Thompson reiterated four strategic choices our diocese has embraced. He reminded us that one of these choices calls us to educate Episcopalians to understand the Christian faith so that we may become strong disciples, equipped to exercise ministries of social justice and reconciliation.

Bishop Thompson stated, "A well-educated and equipped laity is essential for the growth of our congregations and the spread of the Gospel."

A chance to teach

In my last parish, we had an active adult class that met between the two morning services. Although I jealously retained leadership of this class, the teaching duties were shared among me and many talented adult lay people.

While some participants were parents of the children whose classes met simultaneously, the class was also a meeting ground for folks from the early service and the late one. At times, the class was as small as a

dozen people; at other times, it swelled to 50 or more. When the bishop came for his annual visit, he was always invited to participate.

A trip to Salem

On the weekend after Thanksgiving, Mariann and I were in West Virginia visiting my sister. She lives only a few miles from the parents of our son-in-law. On Saturday, we were invited to join Erik's family at their church, the Salem Seventh Day Baptist Church.

We rose early and met them for the 10 a.m. service. Although we were strangers, the minute we entered the church, we were warmly welcomed by ushers and young people who escorted (not pointed) us to the guest book and then to a pew.

Genuine greetings

The Seventh Day Baptists do not have our custom of quiet before the service, and so person after person came to shake our hands and welcome us. Not until Erik, K.B., Sage, and all of Erik's sisters and their families arrived were we identified as "part of the Van Horn clan." The greetings had

Mariann and I both said that if we had been novice seekers visiting the Salem SDB Church, we would definitely return again next week.

been genuine, not generated out of "who we were or who we knew."

The service was lively, the sermon thoughtful and challenging (stressing unity in true Herbert Thompson style), the music was of high quality with familiar hymns, and there was even an excellently executed puppet presentation by one of the Sabbath School classes. The bulletin was so well designed that Mariann and I, even though strangers to Seventh Day worship, were never lost.

On to Sabbath School

When the service was over, I was approached by one of the laymen in the church who invited me to attend one of the three adult classes that met after worship. The class he was co-leading was discussing John Spong's book, *A New Christianity for a New World*. Erik's father was a member of the class, so I went with him.

Participants overflowed the library where we met. They were all open-minded, intelligent, and thoughtful men and women who had not only read the assigned chapter but also had much to contribute.

Opinions were as broad as all of

WEST VIRGINIA



humanity. Some agreed with Bishop Spong; others did not. But all opinions (including mine) were respected, accepted, and incorporated into the discussion.

The pastor joined the discussion midway through the class and had helpful comments but did not dominate or stifle others from speaking.

A living example

On the way to the Van Horns' for lunch, Erik's dad told me that one of the other classes was much more conservative in its outlook, but that

The greetings had been genuine, not generated out of "who we were or who we knew."

the church reflected all points of view and the congregation was accepting of one another in spite of theological differences.

As I reflected on his comments and my Sabbath experience, I realized that here in small-town Salem, W.Va., I had found a congregation that was a living example of our third strategic choice. The church epitomized our bishop's recent challenge to us, and it was not even Episcopalian.

Driving back to Columbus, Mariann and I both said that if we had been novice seekers visiting the Salem SDB Church, we would definitely return again next week.

A challenge for us

I challenge the congregations of our diocese to be the kind of congregation that I found on that

FIRST M P R E S S I O N S



November Saturday in central West Virginia. In addition to being a welcoming, lively, inviting, worship community, also be—as our bishop challenges—a congregation that takes seriously its role in educating people to be disciples of Christ.

When I first came to Southern Ohio, my assistant, Jane, called to outline my visitation. I asked her to inquire if there was an adult class between the Sunday services so I could attend. My parish experience had been so rich in that area that I wanted to taste that part of each congregation's life as well.

Room to grow

Sadly, I found those opportunities were the exception, not the rule. Now, given the challenge of our bishop at convention, I am going to renew that request. I don't need to

lead the class (although I will speak if asked), but rather I would simply like to participate as I did among the Seventh Day Baptists.

That experience is, I believe, every bit as valuable as the "formal" services that may precede or follow it. It allows me to share some quality time with our laity and hopefully have a chance to be fed and nurtured as well.

Let us be poised to grow in our discipleship to the Savior. **SR**



Rev. Kenneth Price serves as Bishop Suffragan of the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Ohio. Reprinted from "Interchange," newsletter of the diocese.

The search for “a home church”

by Hugh and Vinnette Mitchell

My wife and I had been Seventh-day Adventists since we were children, over 30 years ago. From very early on, we were involved in church life—she in her home country of Jamaica, and I in Trinidad and Tobago.

We held many different offices in our respective churches. During some of those years, she served as a literature evangelist and a Bible worker. During my teaching career, I taught at three different Adventist schools, rising to the position of principal before I left to seek employment in the public school system.

We were both indoctrinated in the beliefs and teachings of the Adventist church to varying degrees. Even though there were things that we were not totally happy with, we both believed that our church was the only true church. We never wanted to be anything else but good Seventh-day Adventists.

The writings of Ellen G. White—

We were virtually swept off our feet. We had never experienced such hospitality, warmth, acceptance, love, and genuine appreciation among church folks!

regarded as a prophetess by Adventists—are still the backbone and underpinnings of church doctrine and teaching. It turned out to be a blessing for me that I was not an avid student of her writings, but Vinnette was not so blessed. She was the greater defender of Mrs. White’s writings and the teachings of the church.

In 1988, after listening to a Worldwide Church of God presenter disputing the widely held view that the resurrection was on a Sunday, I began a sincere search of the truth

about this issue. I also began investigating the other things that I had learned in church.

The more I searched, the more rapidly my religious world crumbled at my feet. I quickly realized that too many of my previously-held beliefs were not supported by Scripture.

The more questions I asked some of our leaders, the fewer answers I got. Some church members even began avoiding me.

After a few agonizing months of study and questioning, I parted company with the Seventh-day Adventist

This church is concerned with first impressions

First Impressions Team: Greeters, Ushers, Welcome Center Staff

The First Impressions Team wants to create a positive impression of warmth and welcome to all who come to Living Hope!

The First Impressions Team is:

- a vehicle through which the church can provide to its own people, and especially to newcomers, a personal expression of Christian welcome.
- a group of people who have the gifts and graces to express social warmth and are willing to commit

their time and energy to this ministry.

- greeters, ushers, and welcome center volunteers who have a “one-another” ministry with the people they are called to serve.

- a ministry of volunteers who are kind, friendly, loving, dedicated, and committed because their rewards do not depend on reciprocation from the people they encounter, but on the love of the Lord whom they serve.

- a dedicated, committed group of volunteers who are on the front line, saying what the whole church feels: “We love you, and we are glad you are here.”

From the website of the Living Hope Baptist Church, Bowling Green, Ky.

church and began attending the Worldwide Church of God.

It was during this time that I met my future wife, Vinnette. Since she was such a staunch defender of the Adventist faith, she felt sorry for me and hoped that she could bring me “back to the fold.”

As our acquaintance progressed, we deliberately avoided discussing doctrinal viewpoints. We realized right away that such discussions invariably led to strong disagreements. After such episodes, Vinnette would reflect and examine the Scriptures on her own to verify and clarify her beliefs.

Subsequently, Vinnette became disenchanted with the church and began searching for fellowship elsewhere. She started worshipping with a small home-group of Adventists who were unhappy with the church’s organization but content with its doctrines.

All during Vinnette’s search, I felt comfortable accompanying her to *her* church while still maintaining my membership in the Worldwide Church of God.

Our attendance at the small group did not last long. Vinnette no longer desired to worship with Seventh-day Adventists, so she began an earnest, prayerful, and diligent search for another Sabbathkeeping church.

Soon afterwards, while searching the internet, she learned of the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Ft.

FIRST M P R E S S I O N S



Lauderdale, Fla. It happened to be about one mile from our home.

After speaking by phone with the church’s pastor, Andrew Samuels, Vinnette decided to visit the church and asked me to go with her. As usual, I decided to support her effort to find “a home church,” even though I was not looking for one myself.

That first visit to an SDB church was a memorable one. We were virtually swept off our feet. We had *never* experienced such hospitality, warmth, acceptance, love, and genuine appreciation among church folks! The worship—from Sabbath School to the end—was awesome! We wondered if the entire experience was “real,” or simply that way because we were visitors.

We soon discovered that our wonderful welcome had nothing to do with being visitors. Among its other offerings, the Ft. Lauderdale church is richly endowed with the gifts of love and hospitality.

We were relieved that the congregation accepted us for who we were,

and not based on where we came from or what we believed. We appreciated that this church allowed individual expression and different viewpoints without the kind of bitterness and acrimony that can be displayed in other churches.

We continued visiting and, shortly after, we happily became members of the Ft. Lauderdale SDB Church.

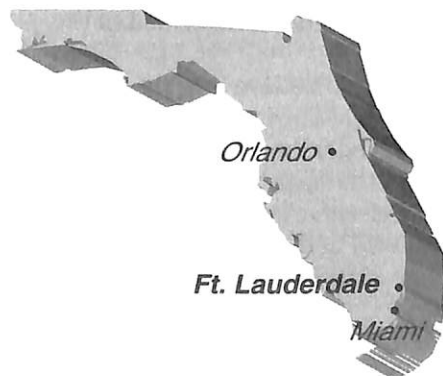
Our experience with the church continues to be a refreshing one. The love and fellowship we enjoy among the brethren deepens and becomes more meaningful every week.

We are indebted to Christ for leading us to Pastor Samuels and this wonderful body of believers. They have helped us immensely by enriching our lives and nurturing our Christian experience.

Our desire is for Christ to use us as a blessing to this church, and to each individual who joins in worship with this community of believers.

To God be the glory for what He has done! **SR**

FLORIDA



God's love kept us coming back

by Teri Morgan

I was a member of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church for 11 years. After moving to Ord, Neb., in December of 1994, I chose to attend the SDA congregation in Broken Bow. I met my husband, Melvin, in 2000, and he attended church with me.

Over the course of a few years, we became disenchanted with the Adventist church for various reasons. At about the same time, Melvin's sister and her husband—members of the North Loup, Neb., Seventh Day Baptist Church—invited us to accompany them to church a time or two.

Immediately, we felt compelled by the Lord to “look into” the North Loup SDB Church. We began attending, just to check it out. I was not prepared for what I experienced the first time we went.

The people were accepting, warm, and wonderful Christians. I felt the Lord's love cascading from almost everyone in the North Loup congregation. They greeted us with hospitality and fondness—not only the first time we attended, but every time after that.



Teri Morgan

They greeted us with hospitality and fondness—not only the first time we attended, but every time after that.

Since Melvin and I were already a part of the community, we knew several of the people who attended the SDB church. That gave us a sense of “community” within the congregation. But, to be honest, we were waiting for the “newness” of our presence to wear off. Then we could experience the “real way” these people treated others.

I am delighted to report that after nearly a year of continual attendance, Melvin and I are greeted with even more love, warmth, and acceptance than we initially experienced.

For us, the kind and accepting treatment that we originally encountered was what kept us coming back to the SDB church. After much prayer and listening to what the Lord was telling us, we began to think of the North Loup church as our spiritual home.

Melvin and I then decided to launch an all-out investigation into the church. We questioned the members and attended some church functions. We also participated in some

of the events that the congregation sponsored, both in the church and in the community at large.

I attended a Women's Retreat at Camp Paul Hummel in the Boulder, Colo., area. (By the way, great weekend, ladies!)

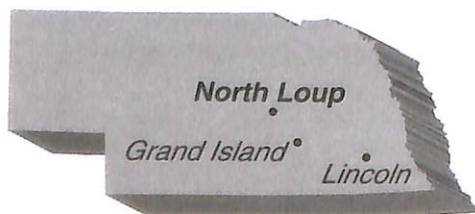
Last fall, my husband and I took church membership classes. Consequently, Melvin has decided to be baptized soon.

Three specific things—liberty of conscience, the church covenant, and church autonomy—have drawn us to become members of the North Loup congregation. We believe that these traits closely resemble the early Christian church described in the Bible.

We also believe that the fruit of a group of Spirit-filled Christians is displayed in how they minister to each other and to their community.

God's love and leading is alive and well in the members of the North Loup SDB Church. Their caring and support have made it clear that God lives there! **SR**

NEBRASKA



From repelled to compelled

Can a church be “too friendly”?

by Shay Rankhorn

FIRST M P R E S S I O N S



I was asked about my first encounter with the Seventh Day Baptist church, and why it resulted in my becoming a regular attendee.

My response is simply that we experienced a level of warmth and acceptance far above our ability to comprehend or, at first, to even believe. We were welcomed not as visitors, but as longtime church members who had been away for awhile.

My family and I had never come upon a group of believers like this, despite the great number of churches we had visited or joined. We had been welcomed to some degree at nearly every church, but not anywhere near the intensity and consistency that emanated from the members of this church.

When we first visited the Paint Rock, Ala., SDB Church, the potency of the greeting was actually overwhelming. This resulted in our being repelled to some extent due to our inability to conceive its genuineness.

You see, in our previous experiences at other churches, such an expression of love and hospitality became—at the very least—diminished, and in the extreme, nonexistent or utterly false. In addition to this, we had been hurt quite deeply by the two prior churches to which we had belonged.

This history of pain created our difficulty in believing that the expression of love by the Paint Rock members was anything but false.

Upon subsequent visits, we began to notice that this was not only a style



Shay Rankhorn

We were welcomed not as visitors, but as longtime church members who had been away for awhile.

of greeting for newcomers, but it existed among the regular attendees as well.

This is a point of pride at Paint Rock. One of the primary focuses is a physical as well as heartfelt expression of the love of Christ. “I love you

with the love of the Lord” is heard verbally as well as evidenced through kind acts one to another.

In short, the spirit of love and fellowship present at the Paint Rock Seventh Day Baptist Church compelled us to become members. **SR**

Pioneers in the pioneer valley

by Lois Steir

"We've come this far by faith, leaning on the Lord, trusting in His holy word; He never fails."

* * *

It was truly a blessed day as people gathered in Springfield, Mass., on April 30, 2005, to celebrate Sabbath and the 5th anniversary of the Springfield SDB Church. (Springfield is a branch church of the New York City SDB Church.)

The day began with Sabbath School at 11:00 a.m. Pastor Huethen Livingston taught the adults and teens on the *Helping Hand* topic, "No Other Gospel." The study was enlightening and informative. Sisters Tenaye Gray and Yvonne Livingston had "fun in the Word" with the Primary and Junior classes.

The proverbial "a very well-spent Sabbath School" ended with joyful singing and heartfelt laughter.

Following a break, Sister Lois A. Steir led a brief devotional. The mode of worship was lifted to one of praise and adoration as over 65 people blended their voices to the music of Brother Beris Gouldbourne on the organ, Deacon Samuel Sterling on piano, and Brother Joshua Smith on drums.

Deacon Sterling, who pastors the Agape SDB Church in Cambria Heights, N.Y. (a branch of Plainfield, N.J.), spoke at the worship service on, "Are You the King's Kid?" Quoting from 1 Peter 2:9, his inspiring message encouraged us to walk, talk, and live as the "King's kids." Our hearts were blessed and delighted as he reminded us that all believers have a place of honor in God's Kingdom, and that we should delight in being Children of the King.

After the hospitality team served a fellowship lunch, final preparations were made for the evening's event. The anniversary celebration took the form of a Dinner Concert that got un-

derway at 8:00 p.m. Pastor Sterling served as Master of Ceremonies.

In his opening remarks, he expressed his joy at being able to attend this historic time. Sister Chevaughn Palmer, our Public Relations Officer, welcomed the audience, and we were ready for fellowship and praise.

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, go, go, go" were the strains from the choir's theme song to start the celebration. Evangelist Wilson sang a solo, and a children's dance group delighted the audience, with the Selah group singing "Yesu Azali Awa" in Swahili. The dancers, under the direction of Sister Shuana Charlton, included Oshana Townsend, Amaria Boland, Rachel Smith, Sashanova McLaughlin, and Tamara Palmer.

Sister Steir gave a brief history of the Springfield SDB Church, dating back to April 1, 2000. After this overview, we launched a fund-raising drive to help purchase the building the church now occupies. The excitement rose as one person after another offered pledges. The audience apparently forgot that it was past 9:00 p.m. and that dinner hadn't even been served yet!

At total of \$10,000 was pledged, some of it given within a five-minute period in the middle of the concert. One person commented, "That's the first time I've ever witnessed such a show of intent and so much money raised in so short a time."

The guest speaker for the evening, Evangelist Josephine Miller, a lawyer from Danbury, Conn., got right to the



The Springfield (Mass.) SDB Church.

heart of the matter with a highly appropriate, timely message, "Stay in the Struggle."

She told how Jacob had wrestled with an angel, insisting on a blessing before letting him go, and how Jacob was encouraged to learn that the blessings were right there at the point of his struggle.

Miller noted that in today's world, everyone wants the easy way out. Believers are labeled as "doing something wrong" if they continue to struggle.

During her talk, hearts were mended and souls were blessed. One visitor even commented, "This was definitely for me, because just this morning, I was at the point of giving up on the struggle."

Once again, a profound message was indelibly etched on the minds of the brethren, one that coincided with the very first message Pastor Andrew Samuels delivered to our church five years ago. That talk, entitled, "The Storms Will Come," was more than enough to keep us "keeping on."

A delightfully delicious array of food, presented in a well-decorated and formal setting, was opened up to the guests just after 10:00 p.m. No one seemed to pay

cont. on page 23

Exploring the Sabbath

by Linda Greene

We continue our New Testament Sabbath study with the story of Jesus healing a woman who was crippled for 18 years.

Luke 13:10-17

Out of all the miracles that Jesus did on the Sabbath, this one is my favorite. He specifically explained that an evil spirit bound this woman for 18 years. She wasn't just physically ill; she was spiritually tormented as well. And Jesus set her free!

The woman stood up straight and praised God. Isn't that exactly what Christ did for us when he removed that burden of sin we'd been carrying around on our own shoulders for such a long time? All of a sudden, we can stand up straight. We're set free from sin!

"So *this* is what it means to be free!" I can hear the woman saying. And I can almost see the look on her face after being stooped over and looking at her own feet for 18 years. Because of Jesus' healing power, she could now look up and feel the sun on her face. It must have been an amazing experience!

Jesus did that for me, and he did that for you, too. After 18 years of walking away from Jesus and being totally absorbed with myself and my own needs and wants, Jesus lifted that burden from me. The date was December 19, 1987. That's when he helped me to take my eyes off myself and look to him for the things I'd been frantically searching for in all the wrong places.

Jesus completely restored to me "all the years the locust had eaten" (Joel 2:25). He has done—and can do—the same thing for you as well. Praise God!

Luke 14:1-6

I don't see anything new for us in

this instance of Jesus healing someone. Yet, there is something about Jesus' activity on this particular Sabbath that strikes me as important for our study.

This passage of Scripture notes that when Jesus went to eat in the home of a Pharisee, he was carefully watched. It's mentioned several times in the Gospels that God's son joined Pharisees in their homes for a meal. When he did so, Jesus was

the company of my family and faithful followers, people who loved me and believed in me. I would have saved those confrontations for some *other* day, after I had been strengthened and restored by my Sabbath rest.

But here was Jesus, who almost seems to be *seeking out* those critical, self-righteous, spiritually blind Pharisees—men whom Jesus also referred

**When Jesus healed on the Sabbath,
He knew that these religious leaders would
be watching every little thing he did in
an effort to find fault with him.**

almost always criticized about something.

The Sabbath seems to have been the focal point to the Pharisees' attacks on Jesus. His Sabbathkeeping was the focus of their criticism.

So, here is Jesus, going to the home of a prominent Pharisee on the Sabbath! Why would he do that? It was like walking into a lion's den. And "there in front of Him," there just *happened* to be a man in need of healing.

Coincidence? I don't think so. It was a setup! Jesus knew *exactly* what their intentions were. He had already drawn enough fire from the Pharisees about healing on the Sabbath. This was no accident. He had to see it coming, but he went anyway.

What an amazing man Jesus was when he walked this earth! And he continues to this day to be totally amazing with his grace and mercy. If it had been *me*, I would not have gone anywhere *near* those guys!

I would have spent the Sabbath day being refreshed and enjoying

to as "white-washed tombs" and "a brood of vipers."

When Jesus healed on the Sabbath, He knew that these religious leaders would be watching every little thing he did in an effort to find fault with him.

The Pharisees didn't respond when Jesus tried to teach them; they said nothing at all. They just sat there in stony silence and continued to watch him, waiting for an opportunity to catch him breaking the law.

But Jesus didn't stop there—he continued by relating the parable about choosing the least important seat at a wedding, rather than the most important one. That way, the guest wouldn't be humiliated by being asked to move down if someone more important came in (vv. 7-11).

Jesus also told the Pharisees to invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind when they held a dinner, not just their family and friends (vv. 12-14).

Our Savior didn't give up on these men. He went on to tell the parable

of the great banquet, where all the invited guests had excuses and wouldn't come, so the poor, crippled, and lame were invited instead (vv. 15-24).

Jesus was saying, "Look, guys, you have to find a way to 'get over yourselves' if you really want to be blessed and honored by God. If you remain smug and sure of yourselves, you're going to totally miss God's invitation, which is being given right here in front of you. *I'm* the invitation!"

Jesus came to save the Pharisees, too, didn't he? He didn't come to save just the lowly sinners—or at least the ones who so obviously needed saving, from *my* point of view. He also came to set those poor Pharisees free from themselves—to soften and break open the hard hearts of those self-satisfied jerks!

I am so unbelievably and determinedly judgmental at times that it really blows my mind! When I have

somehow reached the point where I can see myself as the most needy of sinners and better than no one else, then I turn right around and start feeling smug. I pat myself on the back because I'm not haughty and puffed up like the Pharisees, but in doing so, that's exactly what I become!

But Jesus loved those Pharisees unreservedly. When he wept over Jerusalem, it was those men he was weeping over! *They* were the ones who missed him. *They* were the "lost" of his day, with a capital "L."

How could Jesus have opened himself over and over to their criticism and attacks? The bottom line is that he loved them. He continued hoping that they would open their eyes long enough to get a glimpse of who he really was and why he was there.

So what does this have to do with our Sabbath study? I believe that

Sabbath should be a time of reaching out to the "lost" of *my* world; at least, some of the time anyhow. It's not necessarily a time for me to sequester myself in my safe little group of people who love and support me. I need to take a chance once in a while and reach out to someone who is a little more difficult to love.

I might even need to consider inviting someone over to my home for Sabbath dinner who is one of those people in the church who can never seem to find anything good to say about me. Or maybe invite some of those people who get on my nerves for no particular reason—the ones I would rather avoid so I don't have to confront my own sinful heart.

Jesus wants me to love these people and reach out to them, and the Sabbath is a really good time to do that. After all, it's what *Jesus* did on Sabbath! **SR**

Improvements planned at Camp Harley Sutton

"Work Bee" scheduled for August

Several improvements are planned for Camp Harley Sutton outside Alfred Station, N.Y. Both funds and labor are needed to complete these plans.

Summer projects include installing a water purification system (required by the state at a cost of \$4,500); some excavation and grading to improve drainage (estimated cost, \$3,000); and building a 30 x 40-foot pavilion (estimate, \$10,000).

Future plans for the camp include modifying one of the present dorms to make it a year-round facility. It would provide the same sleeping capacity, but would include an 18 x 23-foot meeting/common room in the middle of the building, and a kitchenette. An addition would provide space for two bathrooms. The estimated cost of this modification is \$28,000. A new entrance road to the building will cost about \$4,000.

A Senior Saints-type of "work camp" is scheduled for this summer, beginning August 15. The main project will focus on the pavilion.

Anyone willing to help may contact Lyle Sutton, chairman of the trustees. His address is:

Lyle Sutton
4221 Dineen Rd.
Friendship NY 14739

Phone: (585) 973-2081
E-mail: LBSUTN@infoblvd.net

Even if you can't work, you can help by giving funds for these projects. Donations for Camp Harley Improvements can be sent to the Allegheny Association treasurer: Mae Bottoms, 2810 State Route 244, Belmont NY 14813.

Checks should be made out to "Allegheny Assoc. of SDB Churches." **SR**





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

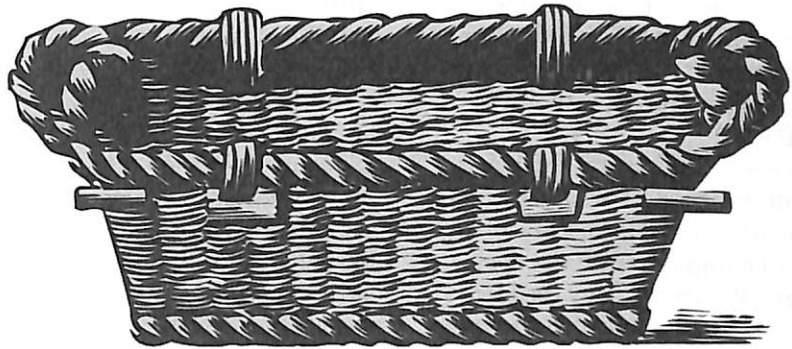
A sewing basket of memories

by Linda Camenga, guest writer

When I was very young, I attended Conference with my Aunt Alta Van Horn. One of the ladies who caught my attention during that week was Miss Mabel West. She was small in stature but strong in the Lord.

Miss West had served as a "helping missionary" in our Seventh Day Baptist Mission in Shanghai, China. She was featured at the Women's Banquet during that Conference week. (I believe that was the same year she received the Robe of Achievement from the SDB Women's Society.)

Aunt Alta knew Miss West personally, and we were invited to her home for afternoon tea. The items she had brought back from China impressed me (I was given a pair of chopsticks), but I was fascinated more by the memories she shared.



In a recent conversation with Susan Bond, she mentioned having Miss West's sewing basket. "I'm trying to decide what to do with it," she said.



Miss Mabel West at Conference in 1964.

Miss West was able to share her love of the Lord with young and old alike. Our afternoon together went by far too quickly. After those talks, I dreamed of becoming a missionary just like Miss West. But the Lord had other things in mind for me.

I have raised my family of four and am now enjoying the special times I get with my grandsons. Over the years, I have learned that God uses our backyards, homes, church settings and camp sites—even our laps—to tell the Good News of Christ.

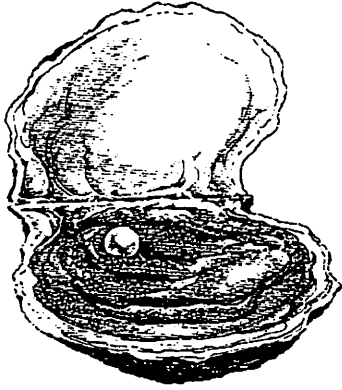
This year, my husband John and I are starting a new adventure. We are moving to Brisbane, Australia,

to pastor the SDB church in Beenleigh, Queensland. We are "letting go" of just about everything and going overseas to share the Good News with others.

In a recent conversation with Susan Bond, she mentioned having Miss West's sewing basket. "I'm trying to decide what to do with it," she said.

I looked wide-eyed at Susan and exclaimed, "Really?!" I then shared about Miss West's influence in my life, and Susan told me she knew what should be done.

That sewing basket is going back into overseas ministry, this time to Australia with us! **SR**



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

An added voice to the heavenly choir

A new voice was added to the bass section of the Heavenly Choir on February 27, 2005, when Loyal Todd departed from temporal to eternal life.

During his memorial service at the Milton (Wis.) SDB Church, various “pearls” were shared in a booklet that I compiled from the 1927 *Sabbath Recorder*. They recalled some of the experiences of the 1927 Student Evangelistic Quartet that the Northwestern Association sent to Oklahoma and Louisiana.

In addition to Loyal, quartet members included Ellis Johanson and Maurice Sayre, both from Milton; and Everett Harris, a student from Salem, W.Va. Each took his turn sending weekly letters to the *Recorder*, reporting on the exhilaration of their evangelistic sessions, along with the less uplifting experiences they encountered along the way.

Maurice reported from Gentry, Ark., that the meetings started out with perhaps 20 or 30 people in attendance, and then ballooned to an average of 50 to 75. Pastor E.R. Lewis directed his sermons to those who were already Christians, since most of the attendees were members.

Everett reported on their work across the stateline into Oklahoma, at Belzoni, where a few SDBs had settled to possibly establish a church. He wrote that it would be difficult to make a “definite report” concerning the good accomplished there during their campaign.

“I can say that there were 12 conversions, five of whom intended to

join our church, and others are giving the Sabbath deep thought,” Everett noted.

The traveling quartet’s task of encouraging and strengthening SDB churches in Fouke, Ark., and Hammond, La., was carried out in established congregations.

In their letters to the *SR*, the singers mentioned some of the delights of their travel, including the beauty of the Ozarks and the more metropolitan area around Hammond in the Mississippi Delta. However, their letters were interspersed with other descriptive details of their journey.

The Association had provided the group with a “less than new” Ford at a cost of \$50. This vehicle was not only for their personal travel; it was also to haul their luggage, a tent, and the other necessities for camping.

Ellis reported that the first day out, the quartet drove only 150 miles because of engine trouble. He also reported that their first camping night was discouraging, “as it rained, and we had forgotten to dig a trench around the tent.”

In one of his letters, Loyal wrote that they had stopped in Springdale, Ark. “We camped for the night and cooked our supper. Soon after we went to bed, it started to rain again. We didn’t mind the rain, but it wasn’t so nice when the wet tent pulled up the stakes and then let the tent down again, making it leak all night.”

At one o’clock the next day, it started to rain again. The foursome rented a tourist cabin, and spent the afternoon resting and practicing.

“That night, we had a hard rain which lasted all night,” Loyal wrote. “The cottage leaked, and it wasn’t long until most of us discovered that fact.”

“On Friday morning,” Loyal continued, “we started out in the rain.

We found some roads that were rutted so deeply that we lost our back license plate in the mud. During the day, we crossed several creeks, some of which were deep enough to flood our car’s running boards. And one creek was so deep that the water even flowed in the holes of the floor boards.”

In a letter toward the end of their mission, Everett wrote about the more established SDB churches in Fouke and Hammond, and how the four of them performed in other churches and at community events.

“We left Fouke on Monday morning,” Everett noted, “and arrived at Hammond Tuesday evening after having six flat tires and driving all night. Todd [Loyal] drove most of the night and seemed fresh as ever when morning came. We believe he could make Lindbergh look alive when it came to endurance.” [Charles Lindbergh had just made his solo flight to France in May of that same year—1927.]

The last of the quartet’s weekly letters was written by Loyal. He summarized their final week of singing, when they not only performed at the Hammond church, but also at another church in that city. The group also sang for the local Rotary Club and at the opening of a city park.

Loyal ended his letter with a note about preparing to leave for Conference, scheduled for Shiloh, N.J., that summer. “We hope to get to Shiloh by Friday night,” he said, “if the old Ford doesn’t give us too much trouble.” **SR**

(All references for this article were taken from The Sabbath Recorder, Vol. 103, July and August, 1927.)



Did you know...

that can of soda you drink every day is worth \$25,000, that daily cup of Starbucks coffee is worth \$50,000?!
 Make a gift of whole life insurance to the SDB Memorial Fund designated as you wish.
 Premiums will be a charitable contribution.



Age	Male			Age	Female	
	Annual Premium	Cost per Day	Various Policy Values		Annual Premium	Cost per Day
25	\$ 108.00	\$ 0.30	\$ 10,000	25	\$ 101.00	\$ 0.28
35	\$ 600.00	\$ 1.64	\$ 50,000	35	\$ 539.00	\$ 1.48
45	\$ 478.00	\$ 1.31	\$ 25,000	45	\$ 433.00	\$ 1.19
55	\$ 703.00	\$ 1.93	\$ 25,000	55	\$ 626.00	\$ 1.72
65	\$ 504.00	\$ 1.38	\$ 25,000	65	\$ 424.00	\$ 1.16

(These sample Annual Premiums are based on healthy, non-smokers)
 Get more information at our booth at General Conference Holland, Mich.!!
 Staying Strong, Steady* Enthusiastic for the Lord!

Denominational Dateline

July

- 1-13 Rez Connection, Batesland, S.D.—Kirk Looper
- 2 Dodge Center, Minn.—Rob Appel
- 3-10 Lewis Camp, New England—Andrew Camenga
- 9 North Loup, Neb., SDB Church—Looper
- 16 Lincoln, Neb.—Ron Elston
- 23-24 Stonefort, Ill.—Elston
- 24 SDB Missionary Society Board of Managers Meeting, Westerly, R.I.—Looper
- 24 BCE Executive Committee, Alfred Station, N.Y.—Camenga
- 27-31 Baptist World Congress Centennial, Birmingham, England—Kevin Butler, Appel

August

- 3 Coordinating Leadership Team (CLT), Battle Creek, Mich.
- 3-5 General Council, Battle Creek

- 3-7 Pre-Cons—Pierson, Mich. (Youth); Holland, Mich. (Young Adult)
- 6-7 SDB Memorial Fund Quarterly Meeting, Holland—Calvin Babcock, Appel
- 7 Council on Ministry (COM) Meeting, Holland—Gordon Lawton
- 7-13 General Conference, Holland, Mich.
- 14-15 World Federation, White Cloud, Mich.—Looper, Babcock
- 15-18 Pacific Northwest, Yakima, Wash.—Elston
- 28—9/9 Malawi and Mozambique, Africa—Looper

September

- 17-18 SR Committee, North Loup—Butler
- 24 New England Yearly Meeting, Newport, R.I.—Looper



The Directory is important

Please, make sure your church fills out and submits its annual Directory report to the General Conference office. The time taken to gather information, record it on the form, and get it to the post office is time well spent. Yes, I know that the form is bothersome, distracting, detail-oriented, and consumes time you'd rather spend in other ways. Still, information from your church helps us all.

Some people just don't like numbers. Sometimes, numbers seem to reduce life to that which can be measured, manipulated, reproduced, and marketed. When people in churches begin to talk about the living, breathing, Body of Christ as something to be measured, manipulated, controlled, we should react negatively.

Sheep counting

The Bible is full of numbers—a book by the name, 12 disciples, 10 lepers, five loaves, two fish, and even 3,000 converts on the day of Pentecost.

We are also told the church is like a flock of sheep; overseers/elders/pastors are like shepherds. One of Jesus' parables asks if anyone who had 100 sheep and discovered one missing would not go and find the missing one. It was common practice for people to know how many sheep they had and to take the time to count them. As we are like flocks and overseers are like shepherds, we can be sure that counting attendance and observing members are appropriate activities for a local church.

Strengthening the Conference

The annual Directory is built on your church's careful observations and counting through the year. The report creates a "snapshot" of your church. Yes, it is full of numbers. But those numbers reflect the joy of joining members and the sorrow of separating ones. They show how many people God has entrusted to your church's care for study and for worship. But, it is more than numbers. Your report lets us know the names of your pastors, diaconate members, and other leaders. It provides the chance to pray by name for the leaders of churches across Canada and the United States. With just a few numbers and names, your report is something that strengthens this Conference.

Snapshots of life

When your snapshot is combined with snapshots from other churches, the Directory provides a collage of the General Conference. The collage lets us see each other side by side, and some things that might slip through the cracks if all the pictures were not pasted together. This can be true at the Conference level when churches of the same size, age, or relative length of pastorate start showing signs of new life or ill health at the same time. It can be true at the regional level when we see a cluster of strengthening churches and can encourage them to work together. The collage may even show that a whole Association of churches is suffering and bring to mind the need for special prayer support.

Moving pictures

Yearbooks are printed, used, and stored. We can flip through the collages created by the Yearbooks and get a moving picture. We can watch new faces being added to the Conference through the late 1970s and early 1980s as dozens of churches joined. We can see people enter and leave pastoral ministry. We can get a sense of where we were five years ago, a decade ago, 50 years ago. As we watch these pictures, we can see motion. When it is in the right direction, we can rejoice and redouble efforts to keep going in the right way. When the direction doesn't seem right, we can say, "Look!" and begin to turn.

Wise stewarding of resources

You may wonder why the Board of Christian Education would devote a page to promote a General Conference office project. It is because the Directory's moving pictures give our Board a sense of what is happening in the Conference. Combined with the detail the Board gets through our annual Sabbath School survey, we can allocate resources in wise ways.

The Directory is more than numbers. It is a tool to help us stay connected in prayer; it is a tool to help us stay connected by phone and post; it is a canvas upon which we, together, create a collage. The Directory can help us become aware of things that we might not otherwise notice (just like the counting shepherd discovered one of the flock was missing).

So, find out who in your church is responsible to fill out the information form and encourage them to fill it out and turn it in. *SR*



Meeting leaders in Estonia

by Kirk Looper



Juri and Marge Venkov in Estonia.

A group from Estonia has been communicating with the Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society. In early May, I traveled to that country to share SDB beliefs and polity with them, and to discover if we could help in developing their work for the Lord.

Juri Venkov and his family (wife Marge and son Albert) met me at the airport, and we spent the night in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia.

The next day, we traveled to Voru, a small town in Southern Estonia. There, we met with other leaders of the group, including Heivo Kaasma and his wife, Reet, and one of their three daughters, Viljar. We discussed the polity and beliefs of Seventh Day Baptists.

The next few days, we met with other church members, including a gentleman named Tiit Toome.

As we talked about Seventh Day Baptists, he asked many questions. "How do you keep the Sabbath?" he inquired. "When does Sabbath start and end?" His questions produced a lot of discussion since some things aren't "dictated" in our Statement of Belief.

Some of the other topics we discussed were food laws, "soul sleep," feast days, names of God, and the differences between Seventh Day Baptists and Seventh-day Adventists.

I finally had to explain to Mr. Toome that Seventh Day Baptists see a difference between the salvation issue and the issues that relate to our relationship with God and man.

Eventually, my listeners appeared to understand why we do not dictate what every SDB should believe. We

talked about the term "personal autonomy" and the two aspects of that idea—the freedom of independent thought and convictions, and the responsibilities that are inherent with that freedom.

My Estonian friends listened, asked more questions, and seemed to understand what I was trying to explain.

Heivo didn't think it was proper for individual members of a congregation to know how to do things without being told. By the end of the week, some of the Estonians could explain the study material, so it took less discussion time.

On Sabbath, we met in a rented room in a Methodist church in Voru for worship. Then we continued our discussion of SDB polity.

The congregants had a difficult time understanding our stance on the autonomy of SDB churches and Conference. When they finally *did* understand, they also better understood our position of believing that SDBs are under no obligation to totally support their work in Estonia. This made it easier to explain how church relationships within a Con-

ference are developed and maintained.

Just before I left, it became obvious that one group would not be happy with SDB polity and beliefs.

Heivo said that he would like to see the church composed of many "cell groups" that meet in homes. He would probably become the main leader who would teach other cell leaders.

I'm not exactly sure how this would work, but I'm positive it would give the leadership more control than in a Seventh Day Baptist group.

Juri Veknov is a finishing contractor, and the leader of the group that is going to become Seventh Day Baptist. He's 32 and was baptized into the Lutheran church in 1993. In 1999, he joined the Seventh-day Adventists after studying the Sabbath question for some time.

It wasn't long before he began looking for another Sabbathkeeping group. He contacted us after finding Seventh Day Baptists on the Web, and my visit followed.

I believe that Juri will lead his group into a better understanding of SDB polity and beliefs. He will be a good, dedicated leader.

One of the first things he did after receiving study materials from us was to translate the tract, "A Baptist Church That's a Little Different," into Estonian. He is having this printed and will use it to evangelize for Christ. He plans to continue translating our materials.

I have found Juri to be a down-to-earth leader who cares about the people who come to him. We have already sent him written materials that will enhance his ministry and help him in his leadership capacity.

Please pray for this group in Estonia, that they may be successful in spreading the Gospel. **SR**



the BEACON

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

July-Aug. 2005

It's the end

by Jenn Layton

Well everyone, it has been a very worthwhile year as the *Beacon* editor.

At first, I didn't know if I was going to be able to write one article a month for a whole year, especially for a magazine that lots of people read each month—including many people from my church.

When I was approached at Conference to take on the responsibility, I accepted, but with some hesitation. I have never been even remotely interested in writing, so I didn't know what others would think of my articles.

Writing the first article was easier than I thought, since all I had to do was introduce myself. I felt good about it, and I was really excited to write more.

But then I began to get a little nervous when everyone kept coming up to me, saying how excited they were to read my articles, and how they were looking forward to reading them through the year. That's when it hit me. All those people were going to read the articles that *I* had written!

I was really anxious when I sat



I was really anxious when I sat down to write my next article, but God was with me through it all. He calmed my nerves and guided me through the writing.

down to write my next article, but God was with me through it all. He calmed my nerves and guided me through the writing.

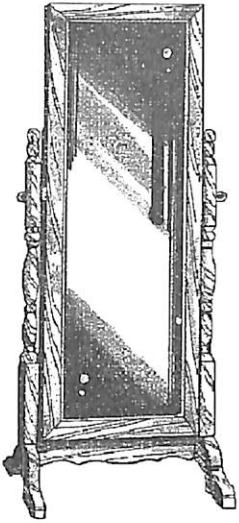
I finally realized that all I had to do was put my trust in God, and He would guide me where He wanted me to go. Each article I wrote after that became easier and easier. I truly enjoyed writing for the *Beacon* every month, and I especially enjoyed reading them in print.

I hope you liked the *Beacon* as much as I have over the past year. Unfortunately, this will be the last article from me this year. This summer, I will be very busy. Not only do I have graduation coming up, but I am also going to be a part of

Summer Christian Service Corps. Along with my partners, Sarah Tyson and Clarinda Siolo, I will be working on an SCSC project in Riverside, Calif. I couldn't be more thrilled! The West Coast!

After I return from Conference, I'll be heading to the sunny state of North Carolina to attend Catawba College. I'm ready to start this new chapter in my life, but regrettably, this means that I'll have to hand over the *Beacon* writing to a new editor.

I hope all of you enjoyed reading the *Sabbath Recorder*, and especially the *Beacon*, this year. As always, you know where you can reach me if you need me. Enjoy the rest of the summer, and God bless! **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

What's the attraction?

As I've often mentioned, I grew up in a conservative, Sunday-keeping church. I look back on much of that "church-going" with fondness, since it started me on my Christian walk

has carried over to relationships in church. In today's congregations, a "brother" or "sister" in Christ is often treated as a *real* sibling.

The degree of friendliness and openness varies from denomination to denomination, and from church to church within denominations.

This is embarrassing to admit, but what first attracted me to Seventh Day Baptists wasn't the theology, the respect for and love of the

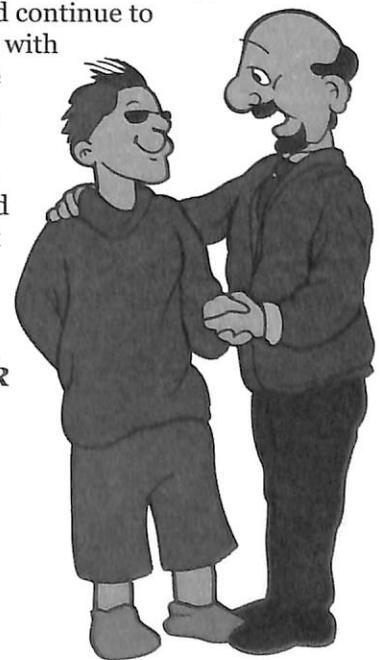
me to a table outside the sanctuary, where I exchanged the coupon for a miniature loaf of bread. It had been carefully wrapped in cellophane and a note of greeting was attached with a lovely ribbon.

I could joke and say that my brother and I were on the receiving end of profound Christian hospitality because "people in the Wisconsin Wilderness usually don't see many fellow human beings." But, of course, that's not the case. (At least, not in the summer!) Hayward is a wonderful place to minister to longtime residents and transient vacationers alike.

Ruth Ann pointed out that "Pastor Mark" has had many offers to lead much larger churches, in much larger towns, for a much larger salary. But he has a vital, growing ministry in Hayward, and he has decided to stay put, at least for now.

My prayer is that our SDB churches will become increasingly vital, and continue to minister with

all of the warmth, grace, friendliness, and love that God has imbued in each of us. *SR*



The degree of friendliness and openness varies from denomination to denomination, and from church to church within denominations.

and instilled many of the beliefs that I still hold dear today.

The congregation of my childhood wasn't an unfriendly one, but it was worlds apart from what I've experienced since. There were smiles and handshakes, but nothing as intimate as a hand on a shoulder or a hug before or after church.

Perhaps some of that "friendly aloofness" (is that an oxymoron?) occurred because the 1950s was a less intimate era. Today, for better or worse, many barriers have been lowered or even bulldozed away. Society now allows—and even promotes—emotional openness. Men now have permission to cry without being viewed as unmanly, and are urged to get in touch with "their softer side."

Nowadays, people are more apt to hug in public, whether it's a friend they haven't seen for a week, or simply a casual acquaintance. And this

Sabbath, or even some outstanding, Billy Graham-like preacher in their midst. Instead, their warm and caring hearts drew me in.

The waves of friendliness and acceptance that swept over me inside the Dodge Center, Minn., SDB Church back in 1970 were brand new to me, and I found it exciting. I ended up wanting to experience that rush of love on a weekly basis. And I did.

Recently, my brother and I took a mini-vacation to our cousin's home in northern Wisconsin. While there, we accompanied Ruth Ann and other relatives to a Sunday-keeping church in Hayward. It was one of the most welcoming churches I have ever visited.

Total strangers greeted us warmly, and we met both the senior and assistant pastor. After the worship service, I filled out a guest card with a coupon attached. My cousin then led

STRONG STEADY ENTHUSIASTIC

for the Lord!

Strong, steady, and enthusiastic... about Conference!

Here in these closing days of May, I am in the process of finalizing the Conference schedule. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in August at Hope College in Holland, Mich.

For those of you who regularly attend Conference, you will notice some changes in the "normal" schedule. The presentations from our boards and agencies (highlighting their activities) are scheduled on Monday and Tuesday. This should enable our Interest Committees to more intelligently review agencies' actions and to provide meaningful input and suggestions.

Bible study

While we must accomplish much business, one of my main goals for Conference 2005 is to help each one of us grow spiritually so that we can remain "strong, steady, and enthusiastic... for the Lord." The Bible study and seminars are designed for this very purpose.

Dr. Paul Manuel of Salemville, Pa. will lead the morning Bible study. In the book of Romans, we find the passages necessary to both share our faith and defend our faith. We will focus on sin, salvation, sanctification, sovereignty, and service.

Seminars

Various seminars are scheduled for Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, appealing to a variety of tastes and needs.

- At the request of last year's Young Adult Pre-Con, two seminars entitled "Reasons to Believe" and "Cults and World Religions" will be presented by Probe Ministries. Our instructors will be Rick Wade, a graduate of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and Don Closson, a graduate of



Dallas Theological Seminary. In 1 Peter 3:15, Peter urges us to "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have..."

If you are looking for the tools to defend your Christian beliefs and how to present the Gospel to those of other religions, this Probe seminar is for you! Participants will receive sound instruction along with a notebook of resource materials. I am thankful to the Memorial Board and the Schenectady Endowment for supplemental funding.

- Have you been considering home schooling? Go to a seminar with Grace Crouch from Palatka, Fla. She, along with other "veterans," will explore the hows and whys of home schooling.



The President's Page
by Don Graffius

- An informative seminar will be the how, when, where, and why of Summer Christian Service Corps (SCSC).

- Have you ever wondered how to share your faith without making a fool of yourself? Check out this seminar presented by Earl Hibbard from Millersville, Md.

- If you still haven't found "your" seminar, how about one that teaches you to use drama in worship or for evangelizing? Rev. Roy Gearhart will be the instructor. (Sounds like something our *Recorder* editor would like to attend!)

Worship and music

Most evenings will include a vesper service with a variety of musical tastes and talents. We also have a great lineup of evening speakers, including a special visit on Thursday night from "John, the brother of James."

You will enjoy special music, children and youth presentations, and hear fantastic organ and piano numbers, which I'm sure will be supplemented by other usual and unusual instruments. If you enjoy singing, you can join the choir or men's chorus.

There will be special times of prayer, fellowship, sharing, etc.

As you can see, I am enthusiastic about the Conference program! Don't miss this annual opportunity for spiritual enrichment. **SR**



The Baptists are coming! The Baptists are coming!

by "Jacob Sladder"

HOLLAND, MICH.—Recently, the city of Holland was invaded by a group of people known as the SDBs. This large swarm of Bs has been seen all over the city, easily spotted by their friendly attitudes and the name tags that they wear identifying their home hive.

The late lawyer, Johnnie Cochran, was once overheard saying, "Although they could be confused with the 'killer bees' of Southern fame, these particular Bs are righteous with the Baptist name."

This swarm of SDBs has congregated primarily in the Hope College area of the city. They appear to have set times during the day when they gather in one area. Their "fellowshipping" continues until they slowly disburse, but only after much hugging, waving, kissing, high-fiving, and vigorous handshaking. These acts are spontaneous, seen daily, and always done with big smiles on their faces. I find this activity suspicious and yet compelling.

Although the swarm does not have a queen bee, they do claim a president referred to as "Your Honor." The President also answers to "Don," "Mr. Graffius," and "Judge."

This might seem strange and confusing to all you readers, but the swarm seems to understand these terms as they describe their leader.

What this reporter finds even more confusing are the terms used for the One that they identify as the Supreme Being. They refer to Him as "God," "Yahweh," "Father God," "Jesus," "Almighty," "Holy Father," "Messiah," "Yeshua," "Elohim," and "Lord."

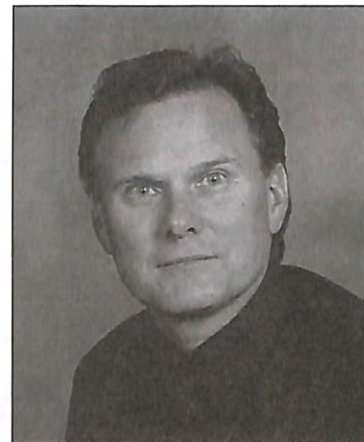
I was easily able to infiltrate the swarm and was welcomed into their

***They welcomed
and accepted me as
part of their group even
though I did not have
the proper credentials.***

ranks. But I found their expressions of endearment to each other a bit confusing. Some they called "YAs," and some "SCSCers." Others were referred to as "West Coasters" or "East Coasters."

Those with special wisdom and compassion were called "pastor" or "reverend," and the terms "deacon" and "elder" were also used. Although they spoke with various accents, they called each other "brother" and "sister."

To this reporter, not all of them looked to be from the same family



by Executive Director
Rob Appel

gene pool. Since they constantly refer to each other in such a warm manner, I can only assume that their Supreme Being has adopted them.

I was able to attend one of their business meetings, an interest committee meeting, and a seminar. They welcomed and accepted me as part of their group even though I did not have the proper credentials. I found this potentially uncomfortable, yet had a feeling of belonging.

They even invited me to one of their meal rituals. The obvious food of choice for the SDB swarm is ice cream. A favorite flavor could not be determined, however, because some Bs mixed their scoops on the same cone or in their bowls.

For me, the group/swarm can only be summed up this way: they are Strong, Steady, and Enthusiastic toward their God and each other.

If you get a chance to observe this throng of SDBs on your own, I must caution you: they are an accepting group who will easily make you feel loved, included, and wanted.

If you want to keep your current lifestyle of apathy and no purpose, you might want to stay a safe distance away. But if you want more in your life—and to know the way to belonging and purpose—you will find them at Hope College, Holland, Mich., during August 7-13, 2005. **SR**

CAST training casts off



Participants in the inaugural CAST Training, held in May at the Texarkana, Ark., Seventh Day Baptist Church.



Mynor Soper

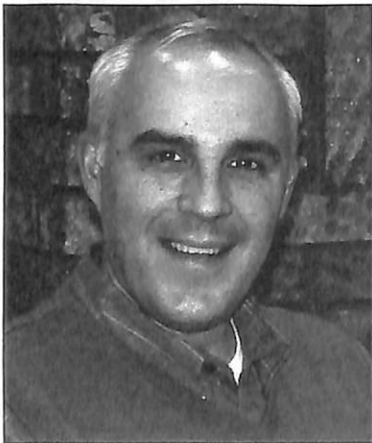
On May 13-15, 2005, training for the new Contact and Support Team (CAST) got underway at the Texarkana, Ark., Seventh Day Baptist Church.

National Extension Minister Ron Elston invited various trainers to present material to the dozen participants. Those coming to learn about CAST represented four different churches.

Texarkana Pastor Mynor Soper used material from Campus Crusade for Christ to reignite the call to evangelism. CAST members are to be on the "front lines" for Jesus, assisting our outreach and visibility on the national field.

Other presenters covered SDB beliefs and resources. They included Calvin Babcock, Kevin Butler, Ron Elston, and Gordon and Beverly Kilts. **SR**

Conference Executive deployed to Iraq



Morgan Shepard

Morgan Shepard, the Financial Director for the SDB Memorial Fund and Treasurer for the SDB General Conference, has been deployed to serve in Iraq for a period of up to seven months.

Shepard, a Commander in the Civil Engineer Corps, U.S. Navy Reserve, has been called up by the Navy to serve with the U.S. Army. Morgan's wife Kate, and son Ben, will spend some time back in her native Rhode Island.

Knowing this possibility at the time of his hiring, there was a contingency plan: that outgoing Financial Manager Calvin Babcock would step in to handle the day-to-day financial operations for both the Memorial Fund and the Conference. This puts on hold Calvin's retirement plans, although he says he still has several months of local preparations before he and Meleta can move to New York state. The Conference thanks the Babcocks for their willingness to serve. **SR**

"Seventh Day Baptists in Central Africa"

This 140-page indexed book reflects on over three decades of SDB missionary service in Malawi, Africa.

by
David
C.
Pearson



\$5.00 plus \$1.50 postage

Call the SDB Center
(608) 752-5055
or e-mail
media@seventhdaybaptist.org

Pastor speaks at national historical meeting

by Kevin Butler

Rev. Patricia A. Bancroft, newly-ordained pastor of the First Seventh Day Baptist Church of Alfred, N.Y., presented a paper at the annual Baptist History and Heritage Society meeting at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., on June 2-4, 2005.

Pastor Bancroft called it a "wonderful experience and opportunity" to be among great Baptist scholars, researchers, and authors from all over the country.

"I so appreciated the opportunity to share about Seventh Day Baptists, both in group and one-on-one sessions," Bancroft said. "So many people had a genuine interest and sincere questions about our history and polity, and how we worship and keep the Sabbath."

Pastor Jeanne Yurke, of the Raritan Valley (N.J.) SDB Church accompanied Pastor Bancroft to the meeting, and was able to field many of the questions. Pat was thankful for her coming along.



Pastor Patricia Bancroft

"Jeanne's history with SDBs exceeds mine by a couple of decades, so she could answer things that I could not."

Pastor Bancroft's paper was entitled, "Chosen by God: Women Pastors on the Frontiers of the Seventh Day Baptist Denomination." Her presentation came on the first evening, right after the keynote speaker, Dr. Sarah Frances Anders.

"Dr. Anders was so knowledgeable and gracious," Bancroft said. "Her true passion is in tracking history in-the-making; how history is being *lived* today."

So, Pat began her talk by sharing how she had just been ordained by the Alfred church the previous weekend (the church's first ordination of a female pastor), and that it was almost exactly 120 years since the first female pastor was ordained within the SDB Conference of churches.

"God inspired me with that fitting segue from Dr. Anders' talk."

Pastor Pat plans to continue her research at the SDB Center this fall.

Bancroft reflected, "The people we met held us in high regard and showed such a sense of respect for who we were as Seventh Day Baptists." She wants to unearth more stories of SDB women to keep feeding this interest.

"They want to hear more!" **SR**



At his ordination service on May 21, 2005, the Rev. D. Scott Smith received the "laying on of hands" by other ordained pastors. His father, the Rev. Kenneth E. Smith, Th.D. (*right*), led in the prayer of ordination and consecration. The service was held at the Salem, W.Va., SDB Church where Scott serves as assistant pastor.

Pioneers in the valley, *cont. from page 10*

attention to the fact that it was almost too late to eat!

The evening provided a moving display of unity as brethren, friends, and family members celebrated a remarkable milestone in the life of our branch church.

Five years ago, only 13 church members gathered for worship on the second floor of a two-family home that Sister Eletha Campbell offered as a meeting place. This number has since grown to over 45 people, with attendance sometimes climbing to 50 or more.

The Springfield church now occupies a prestigious and spacious building at 9-11 Andrew St. in the pioneer valley of Springfield, in the commonwealth state of Massachusetts.

Our "guardian angels," Ray and Sally-Jane Rivard, continue to stand with us in our efforts to own this building.

We know that as the dearly beloved brethren back in Higgin Town, Jamaica, always said, "Through the grace of God assisting us," we will make it, for "we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us." **SR**

Summer Institute 2005



This year's Institute on Sabbath Theology was held at the SDB Center in Janesville on May 30-June 10. Participants included (*seated, l. to r.*): Shay Rankhorn, D. Scott Smith, Nick Kersten, and JoAnne Kandel. Standing: COM Director and Dean Gordon Lawton, Steve Graffius, Gus Tucker, George Lawson, and John Pethel. Mel Neighbours attended the first week, but left for health reasons.

New members

Paint Rock, AL

John Bevis, pastor
 Joined after testimony
 Betty Sanderson
 James Sanderson

Portland, OR

Jerry Vaught, pastor
 Joined after testimony
 Tony Pasillas

Shiloh, NJ

Don Chroniger, pastor
 Joined after baptism
 Joshua Garrison
 Abby Morrissey
 Joey Oyler
 Joined by letter
 Maura Mazza

Births

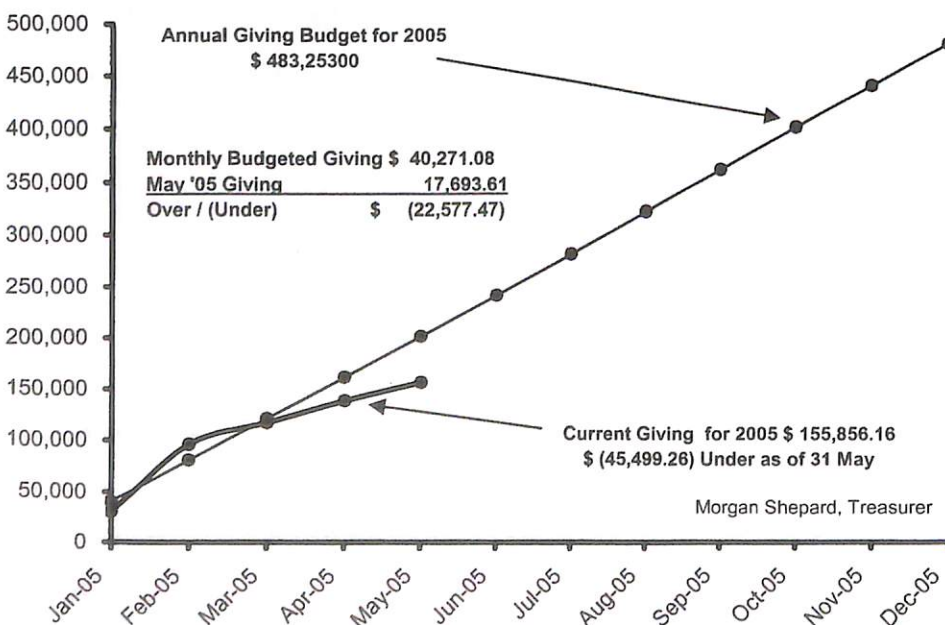
Biermann.—A daughter, Abigail Diann Biermann, was born to Mark and Lisa (Greene) Biermann of Spring Valley, MN, on March 31, 2005.

Geske.—A daughter, Natalie Hope Geske, was born to Kory and Jackie (Giles) Geske of Battle Creek, MI, on June 6, 2005.

Marriage

Messenger - Lawrence.— Daniel W. Messenger and Mary Beth Lawrence were united in marriage on March 12, 2005, at Faith Christian Fellowship in Clarksburg, WV. Pastor Dave Taylor officiated.

Current Giving 2005



Obituaries

Parker.—Mildred B. Parker, 101, of DeRuyter and Truxton, N.Y., passed away on January 26, 2004, at the Martin Luther Home in Clinton, N.Y.

She was born on October 29, 1902, in DeRuyter, the daughter of Henry and Mary Amanda (Justice) Phillips. She attended DeRuyter School, DeRuyter Training class, and the Cortland Normal School. She began her teaching career in rural schools, and then moved on to the DeRuyter Central School system, retiring in 1961.

Mildred was a member of Delta Kappa Gamma National Honorary Teacher's Sorority, New York State Teachers and Retired Teachers Association.

On September 29, 1922, she married Oscar D. Blowers. They had two children: a son, Richard Phillips, and a daughter, Selma Ethel.

Mildred was a lifelong member of the DeRuyter Seventh Day Baptist Church, serving as church clerk for many years. She also served a long time as church organist, beginning at a very early age.

Later in her life, Mildred married Harry S. Parker at the DeRuyter SDB Church, and the couple enjoyed over 25 years together. After Harry's death in 1979, she moved to Clinton to be near her daughter.

Survivors include her daughter, Selma Mickel, of Clinton; her son, Richard, of St. James, N.Y.; and three stepchildren, Eloise Hill of Lincoln, Neb., Robert Parker of Ulster, Pa., and William Parker of Lowman, N.Y. She also leaves several special grandchildren and their spouses, as well as several great-grandchildren.

Her funeral was held on January 30, 2004, in the Smith Funeral Home in DeRuyter, with Rev. H. Ward Hill officiating.

A committal service was held on May 15, 2004, at the Hillcrest Cemetery in DeRuyter, with Rev. C. Rex

Burdick conducting the service. This was special to the family since both Mildred and Rex had grown up in the DeRuyter church.

Davis.—Ruth E. Davis, 78, of Shiloh, N.J., died unexpectedly on August 28, 2004, in the Our Lady of Lourdes Medical Center in Camden, N.J.

She was born in Shiloh on June 8, 1926, the daughter of Herbert D. and Anna (Doiles) Davis. As a lifetime resident of Shiloh, she was born and raised in her present home. She was the wife of the late Daniel W. "Ted" Davis.

Prior to her retirement, Ruth had been Tax Collector for Regional School District. Before that, she was a bookkeeper for several years for the Smith & Richards Lumber Co. in Bridgeton, N.J.

Ruth was a lifelong member of the Shiloh Seventh Day Baptist Church.

Survivors include four stepsons, Marvin of Sandy, Utah, Norman ("Shorty") of Bridgeton, Fred of Shiloh, and Maurice of Guam; one stepdaughter, Naomi Hertlein of Penbrook, Fla.; 10 stepgrandchildren, and 11 stepgreat-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held on September 1, 2004, in the Shiloh SDB Church, with Pastor Don Chroniger officiating. Following

the service, burial was in the Shiloh SDB Cemetery.

Werle.—Lawrenz Dean Werle, 57, of Chippewa Falls, Wis., passed away on November 19, 2004, at Sacred Heart Hospital in Eau Claire, Wis.

He was born on March 25, 1947, in Oak Park, Ill., the son of Heinz Ludwig and Pearl May (Lawrenz) Werle. He attended East Leyden High School in Illinois and Wright Junior College-University of Illinois, Chicago.

On June 8, 1968, Larry married Karen Elaine North in New Auburn, Wis.

Larry served as a sergeant in the U.S. Air Force, 6985th Security Squadron, during the Vietnam War. He also worked as an electronics technician. His community activities included volunteering many hours to the Salvation Army.

Larry had an extensive personal library of books and movies, and researched numerous topics, including religion, angels, history, space/astronomy, and genealogy.

Survivors include his wife, Karen, of Chippewa Falls; and two sons, Andre and Shawn.

Following cremation, a memorial service was held on November 27, 2004, at the Seventh Day Baptist Church in New Auburn, with Pastor Wayne North officiating.

Death Notices

Christopher Luke Lawrence, 21, of Lost Creek, W.Va., died on June 5, 2005, while hiking in southern West Virginia.

Long time SDB pastor, Rev. Kenneth B. Van Horn, 90, of Lonoke, Ark., died on June 12, 2005.

It's not too late!

by Judy Parrish

It's not too late to plan to attend General Conference at Hope College in Holland, Mich., August 7-13, 2005. For registration and housing information, see the May *SR* or go online at www.seventhdaybaptist.org and look under "events."

Please make bus, train, or airplane reservations as designated on the Conference Registration form to secure ground transportation by the Host Committee.

If you're driving to Conference from the Eastern states, on I-94 in southern Michigan, take US 131 North at Kalamazoo. Go to Exit 49, taking M-89 West and then M-40 to Holland, connecting with US 31 North.

If you're coming from Western states, take I-94 to I-196, and then US 31 North to Holland.

For both, take US 31 to 8th Street, turn west (left) and go downtown to Columbia Avenue. Then drive south 3.5 blocks to the DeWitt Center on the Hope Campus for Conference registration. (DeWitt is the tallest building on campus.)

If you can plan to arrive on Friday (August 5) or Sabbath (August 6), the Michigan churches invite you to worship with them.

The All Nations Church in Grand Rapids is 25 miles east of Holland. They are having dinner and a social time on Friday, starting at 6:00 p.m., with worship beginning at 7:00 p.m. The church is located at 1519 Plainfield Ave. in Grand Rapids. Phone: (616) 447-0319.

On Sabbath day, the White Cloud SDB Church will

Michigan Calls

by Eva Millar

*If you've never seen Michigan, this is the year.
Come to Conference—many old friends will be here.
The country is beautiful, all should know that;
It isn't too hilly, it isn't too flat.
It is green and inviting the whole summer through,
And its sparkling blue waters are calling to you.
So we hope to see folks here from over each border,
The Sabbath-wise people who read the Recorder!*

hold Sabbath School at 10:00 a.m. and worship at 11:00 a.m. Their church is 90 miles northeast of Holland.

The Battle Creek SDB Church is 60 miles southeast of Holland. Their Sabbath School starts at 9:30 a.m., with worship following at 10:45.

Both the White Cloud and Battle Creek churches will be holding a fellowship meal following worship. **SR**



From Probe Ministries

Don't miss the General Conference Seminars

including special
guest speakers

Don Closson
and
Roy Gearhart

See page 20
for more details



KEVIN'S

KORNER

Over the past 16 years, I have shared many words in my Korner and on other pages in the *SR*—and emptied dozens of red pens adding or deleting words during the final editing process.

But now, I'm not sure if I can find any words that will accurately convey the emotions I felt just awhile ago.

At the end of April, following many phone calls, e-mails, dollars, and hours of work by webmaster Linda Lawton and the new Web hosting company, the revised and revamped Conference website "went live." (It's at www.seventhdaybaptist.org.)

For the history buffs: A vote at General Conference transferred the responsibility

for the website from the General Services office to the Tract Council. It's not like we were looking for more work, and we took small steps to investigate the options of changing the site.

After presenting the new "look" of the front page at last summer's Conference (and introducing Linda as webmaster), the company in charge of the redesign took even smaller steps in following through with their work. Nothing was getting done.

Through some divine meetings and contacts, we joined forces with another company based in Houston, Texas. They seemed eager to help us out, and could do it for about half the cost.

They have not disappointed us. I hope that you enjoy the "new" site.

About two weeks after its launch, a new feature was added. And here's where I might stumble in trying to express my feelings.

The *Sabbath Recorder* is now on-line.

You might be thinking, "Big deal." In the grand scheme of things, you're right. Dozens, hundreds, thousands (?) of new publications and e-zines go on-line every day.

But it's not every day that one of the nation's oldest religious publications goes "electronic." It's not every day that a little, in-house "organ," with a controlled mailing list, goes worldwide. It's not every day that something you've given your life to for years—trying to be faithful to a small audience—all of a sudden has the potential to reach millions.

So for me, May 11, 2005, was not just "every day."

Staring at the computer screen—and realizing that *ANY* computer screen in the world with internet access

could be reading this "news for and about Seventh Day Baptists"—I was dumbfounded and overjoyed.

Thank you, Lord. Thank you, Linda. Thank you, ESX, Inc.

As I told some friends, "Now I really need to be careful what I say."

Case in point:

In my June Korner, I talked about facing disappointments, stating (and I quote), "Kind of like planning a special getaway and it rains every day until the day you have to come home."

That is *exactly* what happened to me at the end of May.

I arrived in Maine just after noon on Monday, and I did not see the sun until heading back to the airport late Sabbath morning. On the first night, a "Nor'easter" storm slammed into the coast, causing flood warnings and gusts of wind that tossed heavy patio furniture past my motel room. The rest of the week saw the low-cloud ceiling spitting, spraying, or downright dumping rain my way.

While my primary mission was to work on some upcoming sermons, I still enjoy doing a little sightseeing in the Pine Tree State.

But as one wise friend responded to my whining e-mail: "Actually, the rain is good for sermon writing. It keeps you indoors and potentially on task. If it were nice, you'd be out collecting something off the beach or chatting with a stranger on the walkway. ;-) Isn't it in the storms of life that sermons about life take on meaning?"

I stopped whining.

One mixed blessing on the trip was my nice rental car. Sporty, peppy, and a built-in XM radio.

But that same radio console reminded me of my soggy environment. I'm not sure if it was a weather sensor, or someone's idea of a sick joke, but here's a photo of what I saw every time I started the car:



I'll try to be more careful about what I say.

Conference 2005 Host Committee

Hope College, Holland, Michigan

August 7 – 13, 2005

“Strong, Steady and Enthusiastic... for the Lord”

Conference President, The Honorable Donald Graffius

Your Host Committee members—people from the White Cloud, Grand Rapids, and Battle Creek churches—hope to welcome you personally this August. Let us know if you have special needs.

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