



The Sabbath RECORDER

February 2006

News for and about Seventh Day Baptists



**Do you have time
for other people?**

A mission to Zambia



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

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“Service Classifieds”

An idea of an “organized exchange of information” is now in place. Individuals wanting to serve in an outreach or church context, and churches desiring human resources, may now be connected.

Individuals (of all age groups) can send information to Mr. David Davis concerning their desire for service. This may include short-term or long-term missions, service projects, or relocation. A form will ask for detailed information about your gifts and time availability.

Churches can also submit their needs for workers.

Please Note: The contact person does not finalize matching projects but only assists churches and individuals in finding each other.

Phone (425) 226-0102, or e-mail dave@davisplano.com.

Robe of Achievement

The SDB Women's Society is accepting nominations for the Robe of Achievement for 2006. Please consider a woman in your church who meets these criteria for nomination:



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

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

Send all nominations to:

Robe Nominations
Audrey Fuller
908 N. Colonial Cir.
Daytona Beach, FL 32117

Phone: (386) 252-6560
Or apply on-line at
www.sdbwboard.org

Deadline: March 31, 2006



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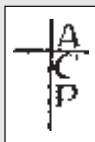


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My time in Zambia

Lessons from Psalm 90:12 & 17

by Rodney Henry

It's a long way from Zambia, Africa, to Denver, Colorado.

On the way back home through London, a security threat shut down the train between the airport's main terminal and the international terminal. We were told to go back to the Central Bus Station and catch a bus to the international terminal. By the time I got to the station, several hundred people were waiting for the bus. And more kept coming!

When the bus finally arrived, people packed themselves onto the bus with their luggage.

I wasn't able to get on the first bus, but I got close enough to yell to the driver, "When will the *next* bus be here?" He responded that there was only one bus every 20 minutes.

When he said that, there was a sense of panic in the crowd. People had airline schedules to meet, and any delay would cause big problems.

Finally, a security officer arrived to organize the crowd since the increasing numbers were blocking traffic.

When people think that they have more money than time, they create a culture in which time becomes more important.

People began yelling at the officer to get more buses, and his repeated response was that the bus trip to the international terminal would be *free*. He thought that he was bringing

"good news" to us because we would be saving money.

But I doubt that there was anyone who cared about the cost. Something more valuable was being spent: Time. In that situation, time was more valuable than money, and we wanted to save it.

The value of time

The value of a commodity is in direct proportion to its availability. Diamonds are more valuable than copper because they are more rare.

In American and Western culture, time is becoming more valuable than money because people

Right: Rod Henry in prayer on Sabbath day. Below: A lively praise time before a seminar session.



Zambia is a beautiful country with wonderful people. But it is also one of the poorest nations in the world.



Above: One of the 16 orphanage centers in Zambia run by Seventh Day Baptists. Left: A worker hands out clothes to the many orphans.



perceive that they have less hours than dollars.

In the affluent U.S., the limited commodity of time is competing with money. When people think that they have more money than time, they create a culture in which time becomes more important and money becomes less important.

One day, Kirk Looper [Executive Director of the SDB Missionary Society] called and asked if I would be willing to travel to Zambia, Africa, to train the pastors and church leaders of the SDB Conference there.

I had done this training for the Society in different places around the world, most recently in the Philippines. I knew that it would take two weeks of my time. But I also knew that there was no more valuable use of my time than the

impact of these international seminars. So I told Kirk that I would go.

A series of sacrifices

Organizing the trip was easy, but it required sacrifice.

It costs the Foundation about \$60 to feed a child for one year, and the same amount to send a youngster to school for a year.

I was called to sacrifice my time, and the Denver church was called to sacrifice my ministry to them.

When there are no extended family members, they find families that are willing to take in the orphans—if given financial backing.

The Missionary Society was called to sacrifice a great deal of money, while the Zambian Conference—through Quistin Chalwe, their General Secretary—was called to the sacrifice of organizing the seminars.

Everyone rose to the occasion, and the seminars were an enormous success.

Beauty, poverty, and disease

Zambia is a beautiful country with wonderful people. But it is also one of the poorest nations in the world. As if poverty wasn't bad enough, they have also been ravaged by AIDS and HIV. One in six people in Zambia has HIV; one person in 10 has been orphaned by AIDS.

Pastor Edwin Makumbo, founder of the Seventh Day Baptists in Zambia, and his daughter, Faith, have witnessed the incredible needs of these orphans, especially in rural areas. So they founded the Faith Orphanage Foundation.

This organization is not a formal part of their General Conference, so they are able to receive money from governmental as well as non-government organizations. However, their leaders are Seventh Day Baptists.

Caring for orphans

Their principles for caring for the orphans are simple: They give finan-

cial support to the extended families so that they can care for their own orphaned family members. When there are no extended family members, they find families that are willing to take in the orphans—if given financial backing.

An “orphan center” is a geographical area where many families are caring for orphans, usually near our Zambian churches. Sixteen orphan centers currently minister to over 3,500 children. It costs the Foundation about \$60 to feed a child for one year, and the same amount to send a youngster to school for a year.

I was favorably impressed when I visited two of the orphan centers in the countryside.

The Zambian Conference

The SDB Conference in Zambia is fairly new. Pastor Makumbo is a former Southern Baptist who started the work in Zambia less than 15 years ago. Today, there are 18 churches with about 2,500 members.

Several years ago, a young SDB from the United States, Jeff Hazen, lived in Zambia and helped construct the large church building in the Buchi area of Kitwe. But they never had any formal training as leaders and pastors. Their Confer-



Rev. Edwin Makumbo (right) interpreted the seminar sessions.

ence could not secure governmental recognition until they received some type of formal training.

Seminars begin

The Zambian Conference gathered 37 pastors and church leaders for the week of seminars in Kitwe, and they were hungry to receive the teaching that I had prepared. Pastor Makumbo translated my English into the Bimba language.

The first seminar I led was on Sabbath Theology. They had translated my book, *The Sabbath: God's Creation for our Benefit*, into Bimba.

I taught the basic theological prin-

The Zambian Conference gathered 37 pastors and church leaders, and they were hungry to receive the teaching that I had prepared.

ciples of the Sabbath, but my secondary purpose was to give them a strong dose of “salvation by grace through faith alone.” They asked many questions, and we dealt with many other subjects as well.

Forming their own Manual

Earlier, I had developed an “International Manual of Procedures”—a 30-page document that condenses the USA and Canada’s *Manual of Procedures* and teaches a theology of the Church.

I taught my Zambian brethren from this manual, and then they taught me how these things could apply to their church situation. When we were done, they had their own *Zambian Manual of Procedures* from which to teach their people and guide their churches.

After a week of seminars, we held graduation on Sabbath afternoon.



In front of the Zambian Conference Center in Buchi.

What a wonderful and joyful time of celebration! The consensus of the speakers was that they had new motivation and training for successful ministry. To them, it felt like a fresh start.



Lessons Learned

Numbering our days

Psalm 90:12 says, “Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.”

This is a time management principle, teaching us to use our time in godly pursuit so that we will gain godly wisdom. It matters to God how we spend our time. It matters enough that He put the Sabbath—a time management principle—in the heart of the Ten Commandments.

At least one-tenth of our money belongs to God, a tithe. And at least one-seventh of our time belongs to God, a Sabbath.



Two of the proud recipients of the training certificates. Below: Pastor Henry prays a blessing over the participants.



Wisdom is *required* to use our time in godly ways. And, wisdom is the *result* of using our time in godly ways.

Seek His favor

Psalm 90:17 says, “*May the favor of the Lord our God rest upon*

Since time is so valuable, we must be taught to “number our days aright.”

us; establish the work of our hands for us—yes, establish the work of our hands.”

After telling us to “number our days aright,” the Psalmist tells us to then turn our work over to the Lord. In our sacrifice of time to His work, we must seek the “favor of the Lord our God.”

If the God/human, Jesus, could say “the Son can do nothing by himself,” surely we must say the same. The only successful ministry we can perform is ministry that has found the “favor of the Lord our God.”

Establish the work

Next, we are shown to pray a very important prayer of ministry: “...establish the work of our hands for us—yes, establish the work of our hands.”

This is a prayer asking God to intervene in our lives and ministries to make them successful. To *establish the work of our hands* requires an understanding that life and ministry is complicated, and that success is most often out of our reach or ability.

But success in life and ministry is not beyond *God’s* reach. So we pray, “*God, You* establish the work of our hands. *God, You* make our lives and ministries successful because *You* sit on the throne of the universe, and nothing is outside of *Your* control.

Use our time wisely

Since time is so valuable, we must be taught to “number our days aright.” In other words, we must use our time wisely for God. Since we do not want our time for life and ministry to be wasted, we must pray, “God, establish the work of our hands for us—yes, establish the work of our hands.”

Let’s sacrifice our time for godly living and ministry, and let God make that time a success by *establishing the work of our hands*.

I am pleased to say that God found favor in my time in Zambia and established the work of my hands, the hands of the Missionary Society, and the hands of Zambian Seventh Day Baptists.

Let us remember to pray for the work of our Zambian brothers and sisters, that God will continue to “establish the work of *their* hands.” **SR**

Former missionary Rod Henry pastors the Denver, Colo., SDB Church. He also served the Conference as the Director of Pastoral Services from 1988–1999.

My enforced six-month Sabbatical

by Melvin F. Stephan

I truly believe that the Lord helped me find a job—not a calling or a career—but a job as a truck driver. But all the new “hires” and those low on the seniority list were required to work Friday through Monday nights because the delivery job was 24/7, 365 days a year.

I made it known at every opportunity that I wanted at least Friday nights off. After about a year, my days off were changed from Wednesday and Thursday to Thursday and Friday.

Driving after the Sabbath through Wednesday night worked out well for about four years. It allowed my wife, Yvonne, and me to have a “date” every Thursday. It also let us participate in Sabbath activities on Friday night and worship together on Sabbath day.

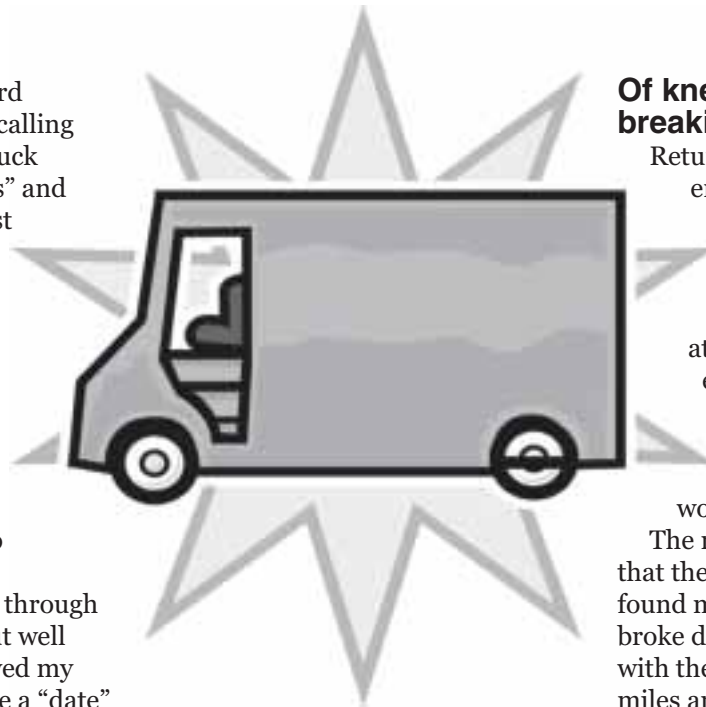
Two years ago, after climbing the seniority ladder from 64th to 20th, I was offered the privilege of changing my weekend to Friday and Saturday nights. Currently, I’m working the biblical workweek: Sunday night through Thursday night.

Walking on “stumps”

Over the six years of delivering donuts, pretzels, and bagels, I noticed more and more that I’d been walking on two legs that resembled tree stumps, rarely bending my extremely sore knees. The last four years, I had my right knee “drained” six times.

Finally, in June of 2004, my doctor—after refusing to drain my knee a *seventh* time—ordered me to get X-rays and sent me to an orthopedic surgeon.

After the surgeon looked at my films, he asked, “When do you want



Each night as I serviced my route, some new problem would crop up. I found myself “stuck” as the truck repeatedly broke down.

your new knees?” He said that I was walking “bone-on-bone.”

Decision time

Yvonne and I looked at each other. We knew immediately that we would have to try to save up extra money to pay for six months’ worth of bills.

We told the surgeon that we didn’t know when I could have the operation. “Perhaps the following spring,” I added.

I continued working, and my doctor once again refused to drain my knee a *seventh* time.

Of knees—and trucks—breaking down

Returning to work after Conference 2004, the truck that was assigned to my route began acting up. While

I was away, the automatic transmission had “blown” at 70,000 miles. They had earlier installed a new transmission, but each night as I serviced my route, some new problem

would crop up.

The next day, the mechanics said that the truck was fixed. But then I found myself “stuck” as it repeatedly broke down. It was strange to drive with the speedometer reading 65 miles an hour while the truck was actually going 12 to 14 mph.

If I tried to force the speedometer over 65 by “flooring” the throttle, the governor would kick in, and the truck would bog down to zero before finally shutting down entirely.

Occasionally, I could trick the truck by resetting the main computer, and it would run fine for a brief time. Sometimes, I could complete the whole route that way.

Beyond repair?

The last day of August, the truck finally refused to be tinkered with any more. I was assigned a spare, 24-foot, six-speed, *manual* transmission truck. It had a miserably clutch that would engage the gears at its own mandated distance.

That truck was still assigned to my route, even though I had requested a different one when I returned to work Sunday, and again on Monday.

cont. on page 10

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Sabbath Recorder?**

**Do you study
The Helping Hand?**

**Do you have
a pastor?**

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to the SDB Budget?**

Your dollars make *The Sabbath Recorder* and *The Helping Hand* possible. Your dollars keep someone there for your pastor to talk to, learn from, and help you. Your dollars enable the Seventh Day Baptist Conference to serve your spiritual needs. Please send your dollars to support your denomination!

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PO Box 1678
Janesville WI 53547-1678

Enforced Sabbatical, *cont. from page 8*

Another “seven”

On Tuesday, the *seventh* of September, my assigned truck was back from wherever it had been, supposedly repaired. Our mechanics drove it out of the yard three times to check it and then kept tinkering. They took it out a fourth time because it *still* wasn't working right.

Meanwhile, I got on the phone with the dispatcher, telling him that I would never drive that spare truck again. It was killing my already sore knees. “I might just go home,” I said.

The dispatcher countered that I would no longer have a job if I did. In effect, I would have fired myself if I had left.

My truck came back from the fourth test drive, and the mechanics finally declared it okay. Wow! That we close!

Not again!

Forty-*seven* miles out on the route, the transmission symptoms and problems returned. I called the dispatcher, and he decided to bring the spare truck out to me. Meanwhile, I “babied” my truck from store to store.

After pulling off the side of the road and resetting the main computer *seven* times, the truck was running fine again—for which I thanked the Lord!

The boss sees the light

My dispatcher finally caught up with me. He wanted to exchange trucks, but I told him that I would try and finish the route with my assigned one. We agreed that he would follow me with the spare until I was on the return side of my route. If I had any more trouble, we would exchange trucks.

After four stops, my dispatcher decided to return to base, admitting that my analysis of the spare truck was absolutely right. In fact, since he himself had bad knees and had even

undergone surgery to get relief, he said that he would never drive that truck again—nor assign it to me!

The next two days, I got a spare truck that was just like my regularly assigned truck. It had *automatic* transmission!

Ready for new knees

I called the surgeon and told him that I was ready for new knees. He said to come in on September 17 to schedule the surgery, and he would



Because of all of the “sevens” that I encountered, I believe that the Lord was telling me to take a six-month Sabbatical from work.

immediately place me on New Jersey's six-month disability program.

I worked one more week with a problem-free spare truck.

Because of all the “sevens” that I encountered, I believe that the Lord was telling me to take a six-month Sabbatical from work.

God took control of the issue, and I went on disability September 17. My surgery took place on September 30, giving me a steel right knee.

Lessons learned

The three most important elements of a good Sabbatical are learning, rest, and renewal. Rather than being completely distinct, they are interconnected. In fact, “Sabbatical” comes from the word “Sabbath.”

I learned a lot about knee surgery and the need for appropriate physical therapy to bounce back from it.

I had a fair amount of physical rest, which I definitely needed, and discovered that rest is vital for muscles after they are stretched and manipulated.

Within six weeks of my surgery, I knew that my renewed knee was solid, permanent, and a blessing. Much of the pain that I had experienced over the years is gone.

Through my surgery, the Lord granted me time for in-depth Bible study. It also gave me opportunities

to catch up on my reading and plans for teaching, and provided multiple occasions for prayer.

I trust and pray that the Sabbatical I experienced through the Lord's timing will continue to renew my enjoyment of life. **SR**

P.S.: On January 27, 2005—my 63rd birthday—I had my *left* knee replaced. The follow-up physical therapy confirmed my earlier thoughts about God's Sabbatical.



Mel Stephan serves as an elder in the Shiloh, N.J., SDB Church.

In defense of religious liberty: The history of the BJC

by Nick Kersten, SDB Librarian-Historian

The first Amendment of the U.S. Constitution says that, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

The Amendment guarantees the protection we now enjoy to express our faith according to our own consciences under God.

Protecting religion from government (and vice versa) allowed groups like Baptists to practice their beliefs without fear of punishment from the authorities. This freedom was in contrast to decades of government in the American colonies where the wrong religious affiliation brought persecution.

In 1936, Baptist groups from around the country decided that the guarantees contained in the First Amendment were important enough to fight together to defend, despite their theological differences. That group of Baptists, joined by their dedication to preserve religious liberty, became the group we now know as the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty (BJC), formerly named the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

From 1936 to the present day, the BJC has fought to preserve religious liberty, protecting the church from restrictive governmental actions, and protecting the guarantee of the First Amendment that government not be tempted to govern based on faith.

The Constitution of the BJC clearly states the purpose of the organization: “The Baptist Joint Committee is empowered to enunciate, commend and defend the historic Baptist principle of religious freedom with particular application to the separation of church and state as embodied in the Constitution of

the United States... [and] to communicate and commend such declarations—as Baptists from time to time officially adopt—concerning public matters.”¹

A more recent mission statement says that the BJC is “to defend and extend the God-given religious liberty for all, furthering the Baptist heritage that champions the principle that religion must be freely exercised, neither advanced nor inhibited by the government.”²

For 70 years, the Baptist Joint Committee has stood against the rising and falling tides of public opinion, defending the rights which allow us to practice our faith. As the BJC has often encountered, this can mean going against the trends of many in the Christian community.

As Christians have become increasingly concerned about social issues like school prayer, the BJC has taken positions which guarantee the separation of church and state, rather than cave in to social pressure to lobby for mandating the practice in the schools.

The position of the BJC in these issues is clear: in order to protect the free practice of our own Baptist practices from governmental control, we must also protect the government from institutionalizing the beliefs of one particular group of people, be it Christian or any other.


In the June 1976 *Sabbath Recorder*, Executive Secretary K.D. Hurley commented on Seventh Day Baptist participation in the BJC in an article entitled, “To Know—And Be Known.”

Hurley acknowledged that there is value in our participation in ecumenical groups like the BJC because, in them, SDBs are allowed to speak in favor of our beliefs, and fellowship with our Baptist brothers and sisters. Hurley noted one of the thorny problems in such an association by asking, “Should we be affiliated with others who sometimes do things and make pronouncements with which we do not totally agree?”³

Indeed, participation in ecumenical groups like the BJC means that, at times, positions will be taken that not all of our people agree with. But the BJC has largely avoided taking stances on issues apart from those which defend the free exercise of religion.

As we look to the coming years, we must ask ourselves the same question put so aptly by K.D. How will we go about protecting the freedom required for us to live our Baptist faith? Assuming that religious liberty is worth fighting for, is the BJC the best means to pursue that fight?

The matter remains for us to decide as individuals, as local churches, and as a Conference.

For more information on the BJC (including a free book on the history of the Committee), check out their website: www.bjconline.org. 

¹As first relayed in an article by Delmer E. Van Horn, *The Sabbath Recorder*, May 1974.

²From the BJC website, www.bjconline.org.

³*The Sabbath Recorder*, April 1978, p. 24.

Exploring the Sabbath

by Linda Greene

Before closing this study, I would like to summarize some of what we've discovered about the Sabbath's significance, and ways in which we might wish to spend it.

The Sabbath is:

- Protected time for intimate fellowship with God, my weekly "date" with Jesus.
- A reminder that *only God* can make me holy—not my own efforts, no matter how hard I try.
- God's visual aid of grace and redemption, a celebration of freedom and deliverance from bondage to sin.

- A time to rejoice in God's final and complete victory over the enemy of my soul.
- A reminder of what I can look forward to in heaven; a weekly rehearsal for the wedding feast of the Lamb.
- A time when I am set free from everything I feel compelled to do the rest of the week. (I don't *have*

- to do those things on Sabbath!)
 - An expression of my trust in God's provision in my life, an admitting of my complete reliance on Him.
 - God's opportunity to work in me, on me, and for me. I rest because God's work is of such greater value than anything I could do for myself or for Him.

Sabbath activities:

- Should not cause me to forget that it is the Sabbath, but should help me to focus on God rather than on myself and my own affairs.
- Should include sacred assembly, fellowship with other believers, and studying the Word.
- Should include special offerings to God and others—not only giving my money, but also giving of myself and my time, worshipping God and spending time in prayer.

- Should be aimed at pleasing God rather than myself.
- Must be undertaken with an attitude of humble repentance before God, not with self-satisfaction.
- Should straighten out my priorities on a weekly basis—God first, then others, then me.
- Should include things that promote healing, in me and in others—physical, emotional, spiritual, and relational healing.

- Should include doing good and meeting the needs of others. God loves selfless activities.
- Should include reaching out to the lost and those who are hard to love, to the helpless and hopeless, maybe visiting the sick and elderly.
- Should focus on resting from my own striving and effort, focusing instead on resting in the unfathomable love of Jesus and rejoicing in his completed work on the cross.

In closing, let me share a prayer for myself and for Seventh Day Baptists when it comes to the Sabbath:

May we never lose sight of God's purpose in establishing the Sabbath. May we never spend so much time congratulating each other and ourselves on our "superior understanding" of Scripture that we forget to fall on our faces and thank God for the love, mercy, and grace the Sabbath represents.

May our Sabbath celebrations be more than legalistic obedience to the law, more than a grim determination to do what's right no matter what the rest of the world does. May we rejoice instead in the freedom from sin we have received, and relish the opportunity we have every Sabbath to lay aside our own struggles and


worries and to pick up instead the "easy yoke" Jesus has given us—to adore him for what he's done and to share with the world his love and freedom from sin.

May the rest of the world see in us the true meaning of Sabbath. May the grace and mercy it represents be reflected in our witness to its truth and relevance for today. Only then will the world fully realize that the Sabbath is not a picture of bondage to the law, but one of freedom *from* the law.

It is freedom to obey God as an expression of our devotion to Him and our gratitude for what He's given us. It is freedom to enter into the

righteousness of God in Christ Jesus, and to receive His life-transforming gift of love.

It is freedom to be made holy through no work of our own, but through His infinite mercy; to have time on a weekly basis to rest in that love, to be surrounded by that holiness, and to be transformed in our inner man by the experience of Sabbath, "a foretaste of glory divine."

We are heirs of salvation, the purchase of God; we are born of His spirit and washed in His blood. May *this* be our story, may *this* be our song—to praise our dear Savior all the day long, and *especially* so on Sabbath. God bless! 



[Note from Susan Bond: Moved by joy during worship at November's South Atlantic Association, I felt led to spread some of that joy to our *SR* readers. A piece of advice I gleaned from Pastor Andy Samuel's sermon went something like this: When a car needs fuel, *re-fuel* it; when you need joy, *re-joyce*. I asked his wife Kay to write about the dance team whose expression of love also brought joy that day.]

Giving Life to words

by Kay Samuels

As the Miami, Fla., SDB dance ministry "Praise In Motion" moved to the words and rhythm of Vickie Winans' "Oh What Love," one could not help but be overwhelmed by the awesomeness of God's amazing love. There was such a sense of God's presence as the young people ministered uncompromisingly.

Mary Jane McPherson presided over our annual Association held in Miami. This was one of the largest gatherings we have had since the inception of the South Atlantic Association seven years ago. Many excellent features filled the weekend, with the dance ministry being most unique.

"Praise In Motion" was initiated five years ago by a few mothers who had a vision for the Miami SDB youth. We must say we are proud of their excellent preparation and delivery, but most of all, we are thankful



Members of "Praise In Motion" worship God through dance.

to God for the spiritual impact that the ministry has had on the lives of the young people.

They have learned not just to listen to the rhythm of the songs, but to the actual message behind the words, and then they apply those words to their lives. It's not just dancing; it's ministering—and they

are trained to think in such a fashion.

Regardless of how many times I see them, I am usually captivated as the young people minister a familiar song. Their movements bring the words to life.

As you read the words of the song below, imagine yourself being transported to another place... **SR**

Oh What Love

What kind of man is this
Who died for me and set me
free?
Tell me what kind of man is this
Who died for me and set me free
What kind of man is this
Who would leave His heavenly
home
Then come down to give His life
as a sacrifice
Just to save a wretch like you
and me.

They beat my Jesus, they beat
Him all night long
Until He saw every little bone;
And when he took his very least
breath
He hung His head and died for
you and me.
Oh what love He has for me
that He would give His life;
Jesus went to Calvary
To save a wretch like you
and me.

That's love
They hung Him high, stretched
Him wide,
He hung his head for me.
He died
That's love
That's not how the story ends
For in three days He rose again
That's love
Oh what love He has for me
that He would give His life
What love!



The making of ministers

A previous *Pearls* highlighted the ministry of William Satterlee. In spite of his stuttering problem, he became a highly effective minister.

It was reported that the first person he baptized was Hannah Lanphere, who married a minister. That statement was technically in error. She married Richard Hull and, working with the Holy Spirit, she *made* him a minister!

Richard was born in Westerly, R.I., in 1786, and his father died when he was about 2 years old. He was raised by his brother, a non-confessor of religion who moved to an area where there was no school. Thus Richard's education and religious training were neglected.

As he grew older, he came under the influence of Pastor Satterlee and was attracted to Hannah's faith. (Her intended husband had died just prior to their wedding day.)

After Hannah married Richard, she taught him to read and write. He soon developed such a knowledge of the Scriptures that he was able to cite the book and verse of nearly any quote from the Bible.

In 1814, Richard and Hannah moved to the frontier of Alfred in Allegany County, N.Y. There, they eked out a living in the thickly-wooded area, raising and educating seven children—five sons and two daughters.

In 1816, Richard joined a committee to draft Articles of Faith for the newly-organized church at Alfred. He was called to ordination in 1824, the first of many ministers ordained by that church. In addition, he often preached to settlements of Sabbath-

keepers in the Western New York towns of Independence, Friendship, Little Genesee, and Clarence.

They sold their farm in 1837 and moved to Illinois. There, Richard established a church in Fulton County, in the area where Farmington Academy was later founded.

It's not uncommon for a child to follow a parent's vocation. The ministry of Richard and Hannah Hull extended to raising a family of ministers.

The 2004 SDB Yearbook lists more than a dozen pastors who could be termed "Preacher's Kids." Some might be second or even third generation preachers, but none can equal the Hull family.

Of their seven children, five were ordained to the ministry. The other two—Richard Enos and Hannah—became a doctor and nurse. A number of SDB pastors, missionaries, and other leaders were direct descendants of Richard and Hannah Hull.

The Hull's eldest son, **Nathan**, pastored the Clarence Church in Erie County, N.Y., for nine years. He also did extensive evangelistic work in New York and New England.

In 1846, he returned to Alfred, where he served as pastor for 35 years. During this time, he also served as president of the trustees of Alfred University, taught in the School of Theology, and edited the *Sabbath Recorder* for nine years.

Varnum Hull, their second-born son, pastored 10 different churches, five in the East (Berlin, Preston, Scott, Second Alfred, and Persia, all in New York State), and five in the "West" (Jackson Center, Ohio; Welton, Iowa; and Milton, Rock River, and Utica, all in Wisconsin).

Varnum's obituary stated that, "He was a man of warm, tender sympathies and friendship; frank,

outspoken, and cordial in his deportment. Few men have dealt heavier blows against infidelity, in various forms in the West, or done more in the defense of truth."¹

The Hull's third son, **Oliver** Perry, was ordained by the Albion, Wis., SDB Church in 1845. While serving as pastor for six years, 140 members were added to the church. He also served churches in Walworth, Wis., and Dodge Center, Minn.; was the Home Missionary in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and neighboring states; and was a director of the Seventh Day Baptist Education Society.

During Oliver's ministry in Minnesota, his daughter, Hannah, married Silas Greenman Burdick. Their daughter, Nellie, married George Bly Shaw, a leading minister in the early 20th century. Their four daughters—Hannah, Helen, Catherine, and Miriam—were prominent in both education and our China missions. Another Shaw daughter, Lura, married Paul Johnson, and two of their grandchildren—Paul and Helen Green—became Seventh Day Baptist ministers.

Martha, the eldest daughter in the Richard Hull family, married Henry Ernst. Their son, Rev. William Hull Ernst, wrote of his mother's struggle over the call to preach.

"It was a very embarrassing step at a time when it was unpopular for a woman to preach. An average man thinks it a serious matter to decide this question, but it was ten times more so for her."

William also wrote that "at a meeting called for prayer for her and her brother, Oliver, that they might see it their duty to preach, he consented, but she could not get the consent of the mind to promise.

"It resulted, however, that she and her brother preached their first ser-

mons on the same night about 25 miles apart. When she married Henry Ernst, she perceived that the marital relation was not the most conducive to ministerial work. It thus became the anxiety of her heart to raise a son that would represent her in this respect.”²

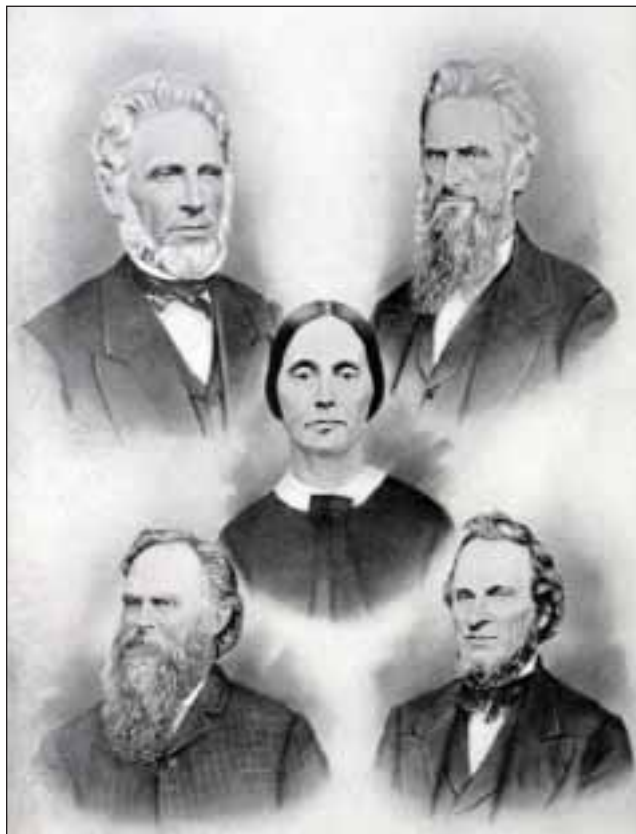
Later, William wrote, “While I was pastor at the Albion church, an aged ‘sister’ said she could remember as distinctly as it were yesterday a sermon she [William’s mother] preached from the Word: ‘Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting.’ I went home and immediately prepared a sermon on the same text. I do not think I ever preached a better one. Was this not my mother’s mouth?”

Martha continued to preach as the opportunities arose. When she and Henry moved to Milton to educate their children, she faithfully traveled seven miles to Lima, Wis., to help the small group there.

The Ernst family were leaders in establishing an academy in Alden, Minn., where Martha’s son, William Hull Ernst, served as pastor. It was in this frontier area that, according to his obituary, John Leland Shaw “began the observance of the Sabbath of Jehovah and of Christ, and became a member of the Seventh Day Baptist church at Alden and later at Trenton.” Both of Shaw’s sons—Edwin Ben and George Bly Shaw—became prominent SDB ministers.

In addition to service with the Heavy Artillery in the Civil War, William Ernst ministered in SDB pastorates in Alden, Trenton, and Dodge Center, Minn.; West Hallock and Farina, Ill.; Albion, Wis.; and Scott, Portville, and West Genesee, N.Y.³

Hamilton, the fourth son of



The Hull Family. Nathan and Varnum Hull at the top; Martha (Hull) Ernst; and Hamilton and Oliver Perry Hull at the bottom. Illustration from SDBs in Europe and America, Vol. 1.

Richard and Hannah Hull, was born in 1819 in Alfred, and died in Milton Junction, Wis., in 1898. Along with A.H. Lewis, he was ordained to the diaconate by the Berlin and Dakota churches in Wisconsin in 1861.

A.H. Lewis became the denomination’s leading Sabbath promoter, while Hamilton pastored SDB churches in Welton, Iowa; Long Branch, Neb.; Jackson Center, Ohio; and in the Wisconsin communities of Dakota, Walworth, Albion, and Milton Junction.

The last day of Hamilton’s mortal life was spent in a wheelchair at the closing session of General Conference held in Milton Junction in August of 1898. After offering the closing prayer, he returned home and passed into eternity while still in his buggy.

Little is recorded of the life of Richard and Hannah’s second daughter, **Hannah** E. Hull. She

was born in 1822 and died in 1892. She married a man whose last name was Eckles. Upon his death, she married Henry Tawney, who died in Dallas County, Iowa.

The youngest Hull boy, **Richard** Enos, was born in 1826 and died of diphtheria in 1863 in Princeton, Wis. He was 37.

According to his obituary, “He evinced, even in childhood, a passion for the medical profession; and bidding defiance to poverty and orphanhood, finally graduated from Rush College. About eight years ago, feeling the necessity of the warm influences of the church of the Redeemer, he united with the Seventh Day Baptist Church, of which he remained a member until death, trusting alone in the sinner’s Savior.”⁴

Thus this one generation of the family of Richard and Hannah Hull served 25 Seventh Day Baptist churches in seven states. Succeeding generations have been affected by their pastoral ministries, evangelistic outreach, and leadership in educational and denominational life throughout the 19th century. This influence continues even to the present.

What a glorious record of Christian faith and life! Thanks be to God! **SR**

¹*Sabbath Recorder*, Vol. 41, #14, April 2, 1885, p. 4.

²*Sabbath Recorder*, Vol. 50, #9, March 1, 1894, p. 141.

³*Sabbath Recorder*, Vol. 79, #13, September 27, 1915, p. 415.

⁴*Sabbath Recorder*, Vol. 19, #43, October 19, 1863. That same Recorder also lists the death from diphtheria of his only son, Nathan, at age 8.



A MOST popular seminar (*Muriel Osborn Seminar for Teachers*)

As a Sabbath School teacher or Bible study leader, do you know how to prepare to lead the small group that God has entrusted to you?

Do you secretly dread walking into that place where you carry the title “Teacher” because you know you are not ready to lead? Is your only goal to make it through another hour without having to deal with open rebellion?

The questions could go on and on; however, I think you get the gist.

Best of intentions

Many of us have the best of intentions when it comes to Christian Education. We know that Sabbath School, group Bible studies, and other educational activities are important in our ongoing lives.

We see children who need to know about the minuscule as well as the mighty acts of God—the manifold ways He has manifested Himself.

We see adults who are struggling (as God commanded them to do) to comprehend the great mystery of God and the mundane reality of doing dishes as an act of love.

So, when the pastor, Sabbath School superintendent, or Christian Education “chair” came to you and said, “I think we need you to teach...,” how could you say anything but “Yes”?

Still doubting?

Whether that was last week or 20 years ago, I bet you still occasionally say to yourself, “I wish I knew what I was doing!”

I know that thought comes to *my* mind every now and then!

Sometimes, I think that I have a great “handle” on this teaching thing. At other times, I sit at home with an open Bible, thinking about the people in my class. Once again, I admit my shortcomings and ask, “God, please lead me. I’m not sure what to do with this passage.”

It’s important to know what God has revealed to us in Scripture. He has promised that His Word is “profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Always easy?

We can help people master the facts depicted in the Bible and use that knowledge to describe what God has revealed. Yet, teaching Sabbath School classes and leading Bible studies isn’t easy, because our goal isn’t to prepare people for Trivial Pursuit, Jeopardy, or the “great pop quiz” of judgment day.

Can you imagine meeting Christ in the air and overhearing him say, “Okay, you’re done with the essay. Now please answer this set of 50 questions based on the minor prophets and mark your answers on this sheet of paper. Remember to keep all pencil marks inside the little circles.”

While we pass along biblical knowledge, the goal of Christian teaching is love—love that flows from a pure heart, a clean conscience, and a sincere faith. This is the conviction

around which the Board’s seminar for teachers has been crafted.

Help for all levels of teachers

The Muriel Osborn Seminar for Teachers (MOST) helps new teachers discover some of the methods that are useful in preparing to teach a class. It also encourages those teachers who are already strong to stay focused on the goal of our instruction.

The seminar also helps people gain confidence in using teaching skills that apply to children, youth, young adults, and adults. And it works to drive home the point that teachers are not in the classroom just to make it through an hour—or simply to drive a set of words into people’s heads.

They are teaching Sabbath School classes to lead others into an ever-deepening love for Christ and his people.

Contact us

To schedule a seminar for your church, get approval from the appropriate person or group and then contact the Board of Christian Education (sdbbce@EducatingChristians.org, or 607-587-8527). We will work with your church to schedule the seminar at a time and in a way that works for you.

We ask your church to provide the meeting place, plus room and board for the instructor. Through generous gifts offered in Muriel’s memory, the Board covers transportation and training material costs. **SR**



FOCUS on Missions

Barriers in Burundi

by Kirk Looper

As one of the more densely populated countries in Africa—with over 4 million people crowded onto less than 11,000 square miles—it's not hard to imagine the difficulties Burundi experiences.

There are a lot of people in Burundi, but not nearly enough jobs. Crop production hasn't kept pace with the growing population. Where food is available, there are few or no jobs to earn money to buy the food.

The socio-political crisis that occurred in October of 1993 created an increase in orphans, HIV/AIDS patients, and the disabled, and the inability of families to support their children. Consequently, the number of street children has escalated drastically.

With these facts in mind, the Baptist Missionaries of the Seventh Day in Burundi are committed to starting educational programs to help the orphans, street children, and disabled. They plan to do this through an educational program.

Basic life skills—that many around the world come by naturally—need to be taught to the youngsters as they begin filling the job markets in Burundi. These skills can be easily learned through the proper educational program, the goal of which is to help individuals become self-reliant.

The SDB Missionary Society office receives messages from Burundi almost weekly. Most of them thank the people of our Conference for the funds that are sent to help their Kingdom work. They tell of the ways that they are able to assist those in need within their churches. They also speak of the sacrifice of their pastors—and especially of Executive Director Gilbert Nduwayo—as they travel to the different churches and groups to encourage them and teach them SDB polity and beliefs.

We are so thankful for those who are willing to make sacrifices to increase the Seventh Day Baptist program in Burundi! Most have problems simply getting food on the table for their families.

Over the past couple of years, funds have been sent to help with the medical needs of church members. Money has also helped to



Pastor Gilbert Nduwayo, Executive Director of the Burundi Conference.

purchase office space and supplies, fund travel for the workers and the Executive Director, and provide food, water, and clothing. They keep detailed records of these funds, and I was able to check on some of the accounting during my recent visit. We are pleased that you, as members of the Conference of USA and Canada, are willing to donate to these causes.

Our Burundi brethren report that they have two problems in their work of evangelization.

First, they have no plots where they can build meeting houses. The government controls the placement of land in Burundi, unless you can afford to buy it. It does not give the land to churches.

Up to now, they have bought only 13 lots for the 28 organized churches. Thus groups often rent space for classrooms. This is not only expensive but frustrating, since these funds could be better spent buying *their own* land and buildings.

Secondly, some of the groups that have land are building meeting houses, but they don't have the funds to buy iron sheets to cover these structures. They ask for donations to help defray this expense. One sheet of iron costs \$17, and most of the buildings will need 30 sheets.

These two problems are serious obstacles as they try to evangelize other provinces in their country. They also inhibits the growth of established congregations.

Without land and buildings, our SDB churches in Burundi are looked upon as "temporary," and people don't want to get involved in them.

As in many countries, churches are viewed with disfavor if they do not get involved in the welfare of the region. Benevolent organizations—such as churches—are expected to be willing and anxious to help with existing medical, educational, and social programs.

Of course, this takes money, and most of our overseas churches do not have extra funds available.

If they *do* try to get involved but can't come up with the funds, then they are embarrassed. And if they *don't* get involved, then they find that their organizational and growth potential is delayed or stopped altogether.

We look forward to the time when Seventh Day Baptists in Burundi will have a reputation like SDBs in Malawi, providing hospitals, clinics, and social activities in many of their communities. **SR**



the BEACON

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

February 2006

Lessons from the waterfalls

by Micayla Neher

For the past couple of years, my parents have gone crazy for “waterfall watching.” In 2005, I had the pleasure to join in on one of their expeditions.

While making our way up and down the trails of the many waterfalls we looked at, I had a lot of time to think about my relationship with God.

There was one waterfall in particular that caught my attention. It was the largest one that I had ever seen, called Bond Falls. (No, it wasn't named after all the Bonds we have in the denomination.) To me, this waterfall really parallels some of our relationships with God.

Things start off going fairly smoothly—this is the river. Sure, some bumpy situations come along, but we know that God is with us and we can overcome them. There might even be some rapids that pop up.

Then, the big ordeal comes! You feel like there's nowhere to go but down. This is the waterfall. At Bond Falls, there is a giant rock barricade in the middle of it. Some of us may feel that this is like our lives. Sometimes when things come up, we feel that God isn't always with us. But in reality, He still is.

Soon we overcome that obstacle, and feel that we've “come back together.” That's the part of the river at the bottom of the falls.

If you think about it, our faith in God seems to separate us. We think

we have the most faith in Him if we feel that He is with us and when our lives are going smoothly. That's why we need to really look at where our faith is. Does our faith “show up” if we think that our lives are going all fine and dandy? Or do we still have our faith when “things” come up? We need to have faith all the time.

This reminds me of the poem “Footprints.” A man is walking on the beach and scenes from his life flash before him. He notices that during the hardest times in his life there was only one set of footprints. He asks, “Lord, why is it that at the hardest times in my life you left me?” The Lord answers, “I didn't leave you. For at those times I carried you.” (*My paraphrase.*)

God never leaves us. The sooner we realize that, our lives will be so much better. We will have the hope that we need to get through our ordeals.

God's beauty is all around us, and we can find life's little lessons in almost everything.

My mom brought another waterfall to my attention. One portion of it is man-made; just a concrete slab that the water goes over. But no vegetation really grows on that side. The other side has the original falls.

There, a whole bunch of things were growing and it was beautiful.

Here's a good lesson out of this one, too. If *we* are the ones who are trying to make everything right—but don't include God in our plan—it's not going to turn out as beautifully as we would like, if at all. With God on our side, we can do anything, and make it beautiful.

So the next time that you find life has you down, just remember, “This too shall pass.” Someday soon, after your “down” time, things are going to get better and God will help you make your life beautiful. Just remember, always have faith. **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*

Breaking the missionary mold

I've never thought of myself as a missionary. Aren't missionaries highly spiritual individuals, gifted with silver-tongued oratory skills, who know their Bibles inside and out? They need cast-iron stomachs so they can eat such delicacies as turtle soup with "inners" (a.k.a. guts) and chicken-foot soup.

Plus, don't missionaries have to tolerate long airplane flights without throwing up, travel dusty roads without choking, and ford rivers without drowning? So, being a missionary has never been a goal of mine.

One day, Pastor George Calhoun (of the Milton, Wis., church) remarked, "Most of us will never be able to go to Africa, but we can be missionaries right here at home."

With his words still ringing in my ears, I signed up—with much trepidation—for a missions trip to Kiln, Miss. Along with 14 others from our church, I would help with the clean-up from hurricane Katrina, under the sponsorship of Samaritan's Purse.

We drove through the night, reaching Kiln 17 hours later. My stiff, 60-year-old body could barely walk into the church where we were to sleep and eat for the next four days.

During orientation, we learned that we would be doing "mud-outs"—entering flood-damaged homes to knock down drywall, tear up flooring, and toss storm-damaged furniture and personal belongings.

Then the speaker talked about the dangers facing us.

We had brought along donated safety glasses, rubber gloves, breathing masks, and protective clothing. Samaritan's Purse provided rubber boots and extra gloves.

As the talk continued, I became apprehensive. ("Scared silly" is a more apt description!)

These mold-infested, highly toxic homes had been undisturbed for five months. Black mold presented the most danger, and could even be fatal. There was also the possibility of contracting E. coli and other infections. My immune system has been compromised by chemotherapy, so I knew that I had to be extra careful.

I quickly volunteered to work in the kitchen, preparing meals for 100 workers. But I felt like a failure—that I was "copping out" of the dangerous work, letting my "teammates" down, and not trusting God to keep me safe.

That evening, I admitted my fears to Pastor George. He said that working in the kitchen was just as important as any other job. Still, I wanted to at least *try* working on a house.

The first home we went to had been cleared of furniture and belongings, but debris covered the large yard. The water damage and mold wasn't half as bad as we had expected. We tore out walls, tossed appliances and rugs, and pulled nails for hours. *I can do this!* I thought.

The second house we worked on was a different story.

It had been closed up for months, with everything still inside—personal items, water-logged furniture, carpeting, clothing, food, etc. If the mold didn't kill us, the smells would!

We learned that there were 10 different kinds of mold in the house, with the deadly black mold the most

prevalent. We wisely wore all of our protective equipment, even though it made us hot and sweaty.

While the physical work was difficult, the hardest part was deciding what to toss and what to save. Many items were irreplaceable: framed certificates and photographs, family heirlooms, hand-crafted furniture.

The woman of the house was an accomplished artist, and we found literally dozens of ruined paintings and metal sculptures. (Workers at another house had to take an ax to the owner's grand piano.)

There were a few minor cuts and bumps, but God kept us safe during the entire trip.

Our team was a physical presence of God's love. At both homes, we left a Bible inscribed with our signatures and words of encouragement. We even presented a Bible to a neighbor, who broke down in tears. Life is still difficult for many of the hurricane survivors.

I'm a missionary, an ambassador for Christ. *All* of us are missionaries. We simply have to put our faith into action. **SR**



Leanne suited up in protective gear.

*Making Christ's Mission
OUR Mission*

Luke 4:18

Houghton, N.Y. August 6-12, 2006



The President's Page
by Robert Van Horn

Back to basics

As a part of the Conference theme of “Making Christ’s Mission Our Mission,” I am asking our Bible study leaders to bring to us more “teaching” on the basic disciplines of the Christian walk.

It has been my experience that many Christians are not living in victory because they are not aware of the promises of God. Therefore, when Satan comes at them with a lie, they are easily beguiled.

There are two areas that we, as Christians, need to address in order to live victorious lives.

A matter of heart, and action

The first is the “heart.” Where is our heart’s real allegiance?

Many believe that becoming a Christian simply means praying the “sinner’s prayer” and then continuing to live just like they did prior to praying.

When Scripture says, “Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shall be saved,” we need to make sure that we understand that belief is not only accepting but *acting* on the words Jesus spoke.

The apostle James pointed out that “faith without works is dead.” Christ must occupy first place in our hearts if we are to be motivated to put our faith into action.

Where’s the discipline?

The second area that we need to address is that the motivation of our hearts must propel us to *discipline*

our lives to include the basics of our Christian faith: Bible study, prayer, fasting, witnessing, and reaching out to people. This last basic—“reaching out to people”—is what our theme Scripture describes as Christ’s mission.

These areas of discipline will help us understand the power of the Holy Spirit and assist us as we seek God’s empowerment in our daily walk.

**Many Christians are
not living in victory
because they are
not aware of the
promises of God.**

The Bible also reminds us that “where our treasure is, there will our heart be also.” The saying, “Seven days without prayer will make one weak,” demonstrates the principle that what we immerse ourselves in—or fail to do—shows what we treasure in our hearts.

Study daily

So, what am I trying to say?

I am concerned that spiritual discipline in the daily lives of Christians has become passé. I would like us to focus on spending more time in daily Bible study and prayer, making Christ first—not just on the Sabbath, but *every* day.

Daily study can provide us with the tools we need to understand the many facets of our Christian walk. For instance, God blessed and made holy *all* of the Sabbath Day.

Is your Sabbath dedicated to holy activities the *entire* day? Or do those activities take up only one or two hours?

Do you know what the Bible teaches about healing? Do you know what it teaches on being set free?

What is gossip, according to the Scriptures? What should our speech sound like?

Do you know what God teaches on tithing, offerings, or “first fruits”? What does it mean to be a steward for God?

Apply the knowledge

Scripture says, “Study to show thyself approved, a workman that needs not be ashamed, rightly handling the word of God” (2 Timothy 2:15).

We need to remember that knowledge is the beginning of wisdom. Learning to apply that knowledge becomes the *next* step in the Christian walk.

Before you stop reading this, please ask the Lord what areas you need to develop in *your* life. Then make a plan on how to accomplish them. It may be beneficial to ask a friend to help keep you accountable.

May God bless and assist you as you strive to draw closer to Him in spirit and in truth. **SR**



Are you kidding?

Seventh Day Baptists are givers! There is no question in my mind that SDBs, per capita, give more and support programs better than any other Christian group. I can say this first because it is true, and secondly because if it weren't true, we would not exist today!

With that said, we give less today than we did five years ago. Moreover, five years ago, we gave less than we did 10 years ago. This has been a cycle since about the early 1980s. Why has this happened?

Twenty-five years ago there were not as many non-profit organizations to give to as there are today. It seems that 501(c)3 organizations have tripled in the past quarter century. Everybody has a cause, and everybody is after the same piece of pie.

The most upsetting thing to me is the number of groups that "look" to be a charity, but are in fact profit centers operating outside of the organization they pretend to be affiliated with. These are the groups that call you to help the families of those who have fallen "in the line of duty." These calls pretend to represent people who have lost loved ones, but are actually professional phone solicitation companies that take most of what is collected and line their own pockets.

This is where discernment comes in. We must be aware to whom we are giving and what the giving is supposed to support.

That is why we cannot go wrong when we give to the church. The church has the knowledge of where the tithe is needed and who needs it the most.

Whether it be a love gift, missionary assistance, disaster relief, community outreach, or simply helping someone pay a bill, the church is in the position to help those most in need. Likewise, when the local church or individuals give to the

Many people claimed it was the best Conference that they ever attended, and yet our offering was one of the lowest.

General Conference, there is a trust that the funds are being used where the ministry opportunities are influential.

More than 15 years ago, we really promoted our annual General Conference offering. The offering at the Conference session was large, and the local churches phoned in their special Conference giving. It was in excess of \$30,000!

This past General Conference, the combined offering was just over \$12,000. Many people claimed it was the best Conference that they ever



by Executive Director
Rob Appel

attended, and yet our offering was one of the lowest.

Q. Why would the Conference offering be so low while people were so excited by such a dynamic session?

A. We have poorly promoted the Conference offering.

"Why don't we implement a mid-year Conference offering?" That is a great idea, reader. Let's do it!

Let's select a Sabbath in February and call it a "Mid-Year Conference Offering." We could ask the churches to take up a special offering in addition to the churches' tithes and offerings, and then phone or e-mail in their amounts. It would be just like at Conference sessions of the past (except for the e-mail part).

"How about doing this the last Sabbath in February so people can organize and promote this special Sabbath prior to the event?" Another outstanding idea, reader! Wow—it's as if you are reading my mind!

So, announcing:

February 25, 2006

Mid-Year

General Conference Offering

Call (608) 752-5055 or e-mail robappel@seventhdaybaptist.org and report the amount your church collected.

We can all make a difference in what we support. Let's support each other in our work for Christ! **SR**

Keeping the Faith

by Morgan Shepard

Editor's note: Morgan Shepard was deployed to Iraq last summer as a commander in the U.S. Navy Reserve. He serves as our Conference Treasurer and Financial Director for the Memorial Fund.)



It's January 1, 2006, as I write this letter in Iraq. 2005 has ended (thankfully without a bang), and a new year is upon us. It will be one more month until I am in the arms of my beloved Kate and holding my "not so little anymore" son, Ben.

Needless to say, I am focused on getting home at this point and getting back to serving Seventh Day Baptists around the country.

I've done a lot of reading these past six months, and one theme that keeps coming back to me is "Faith." During my devotional this morning, I came across 2 Peter 1:5-8:

"For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to broth-

erly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (NIV).

A few weeks back, I had the opportunity to visit two Kurdish villages in Northern Iraq, Tena and Dehey. Both of these Christian villages were destroyed by Saddam's army back in the late 1980s in an effort to force the Kurds into the cities so he could control them.

Most of the Kurds fled into the mountains to the north, or to the four corners of the world. Just in the last few years, these families have started to return to their ancestral homes.

Through the efforts of private Christian organizations, the villages are being rebuilt. Tena has new homes and will soon get a church. Dehey has a new church built by missionaries back in 1996, and more homes are being built every day.

I was also privileged to visit a 1,700-year-old Assyrian Christian church that is still in use. Amazingly, this church is within sight of one of



A local member stands inside a 1,700-year-old church in Iraq.

Saddam's old palaces, yet it wasn't destroyed.

What do these villages and people have in common? Faith.

When their homes were being destroyed, when their lives were in peril, when all seemed lost, did they have faith that they would return to their homes? I don't know. But after visiting and talking with them, I do know that they had faith that God would provide.

These are some of the most gracious and faith-filled people I have met during my stay in Iraq. I think faith kept the ancient Assyrian Christian church standing in the shadow of evil.

I have faith that God will bring me safely home to my family, and I'm looking forward to continuing my study in faith and sharing that message. I also look forward to getting back and resuming my service to Seventh Day Baptists. I have faith that God has a plan for SDBs.

I hope that we can keep our faith during hard times, much like the Kurdish Christians have kept their faith.

I can't wait to see all of you when I get back. God Bless. **SR**

Florida church on the move

The Seventh Day Baptist Church of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., is on the move. Two years ago, the group began as a branch of the Miami Seventh Day Baptist Church. In 2005, it was recognized as a member church of the SDB Conference of USA and Canada.

The church has moved its worship location to a more spacious facility that is better able to meet the needs of the congregation.

They now meet in the Redeemer Lutheran Church building at 3500 W. Oakland Park Blvd., Lauderdale Lakes, Fla. Their mailing address remains:

*PO Box 101163
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33310
Phone: (754) 244-5638*

All of the brothers and sisters of our Fort Lauderdale church ask for your continued prayers and support.

Nigerian Secretary passes

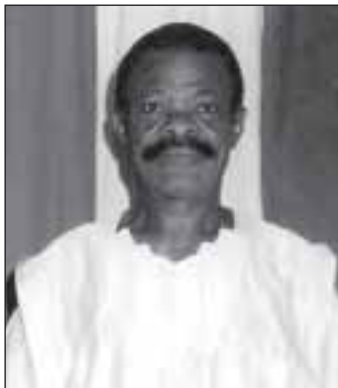
by Kirk Looper

We regretfully announce the death of Rev. Lawrence Uchegbounu, former General Secretary of the Nigerian Conference of Seventh Day Baptist Churches. We will miss all of the unselfish work he did, and we pray for his ministry to continue through Godfrey Achor, the new General Secretary.

Former Secretary, the late Rev. Robinson, appointed Rev. Uchegbounu to the office in 1991.

One of Pastor Uchegbounu's first responsibilities was to attend the 1992 SDB World Federation sessions in New Zealand. I remember those gatherings well. Lawrence came down with malaria and missed most of the meetings.

Missionary and nurse Trudy Ingoe was available and helped him through most of his discomfort. It was a difficult time for him. On top of everything else, he lost most of his clothes on the return trip home.



Rev. Lawrence Uchegbounu

A few years later, Pastor Uchegbounu was hospitalized with terrible burns from a firebomb that was tossed into a church. He lived, but it took many operations and skin grafts to get him back to where he could do the work that he felt called to do.

His ministry was often dangerous as he traveled north to evangelize Muslims.

Because of his activities there, he was jailed several times. Once, he lost all of his clothes and belongings.

Pastor Uchegbounu introduced several of their leaders to the Lord, and they ended up accepting Jesus as their Savior. He really "stretched" himself and his family for the sake of those he ministered to.

It was not uncommon for him to contact our office here in the U.S. and request money to repay a loan that he had obtained to help those who moved to his area from the North.

Pastor Uchegbounu was a gentle man with a big heart. We honor him with many prayers and thoughts of appreciation. He will be greatly missed.

Thank you, Rev. Lawrence Uchegbounu, for *all* you did to further God's Kingdom. **SR**

Denominational Dateline

February

- 4 Russellville, Ark.—Ron Elston
- 7 Seminar, Warwick, R.I.—Kirk Looper
- 10 Tract Council (TCC) Core Committee, SDB Center, Janesville, Wis.—Kevin Butler
- 23-26 Lincoln, Neb., SDB Fellowship—Elston
- 24 Coordinating Leadership Team (CLT), Daytona Beach, Fla.
- 25-27 General Council, Daytona Beach

March

- 6 Baptist Joint Committee (BJC) Executive Committee, Washington, D.C.—Butler
- 11 First Hopkinton Seventh Day Baptist Church, Ashaway, R.I.—Looper
- 25 Alfred Station (N.Y.) Seventh Day Baptist Church—Looper
- 19 Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society

- 25 Annual Meeting, Westerly, R.I.—Looper
- North Loup, Neb., Seventh Day Baptist Church—Butler
- 25 Diaconate Workshop, Verona, N.Y.—Andrew Camenga
- 31-4/2 Denver, Colo., Seventh Day Baptist Church—Nick Kersten

April

- 1 Alfred Station SDB Church—Gordon Lawton
- 22-23 SDB Memorial Fund Quarterly Meeting, Colorado Springs, Colo.—Calvin Babcock
- 22-23 SDB Missionary Society Board of Managers Meeting, Westerly—Looper, Elston
- 23 Seventh Day Baptist Board of Christian Education Directors Meeting, Alfred Station—Camenga

Marriages

Bullinger - Brisben.—Jeremy Adam Bullinger and Julie Anne Brisben were united in marriage on December 29, 2004, in Greenville, SC, with Pastor Matthew Olson officiating.

Bonesteel - Rose.—Kevin Bonesteel and Jennifer Rose were united in marriage on August 27, 2005, at the First Baptist Church in North Adams, MA. Pastors Matthew Olson and Joseph Decosta officiated.

Hauber - Bennett.—David W. Hauber and Fay L. Bennett were united in marriage on September 17, 2005, at the First Sev-

enth Day Baptist Church of Hebron in Coudersport, PA. Pastor JoAnne Kandel officiated.

Cheries - Ring.—Lawrence Cheries and Janie Ring were united in marriage on December 17, 2005, at the Paint Rock, AL, Seventh Day Baptist Church. Pastor John D. Bevis officiated.

Butler - Lee.—Matthew Butler and Danielle Lee were united in marriage on January 1, 2006, at the Milton, WI, Seventh Day Baptist Church with Pastor George Calhoun officiating.

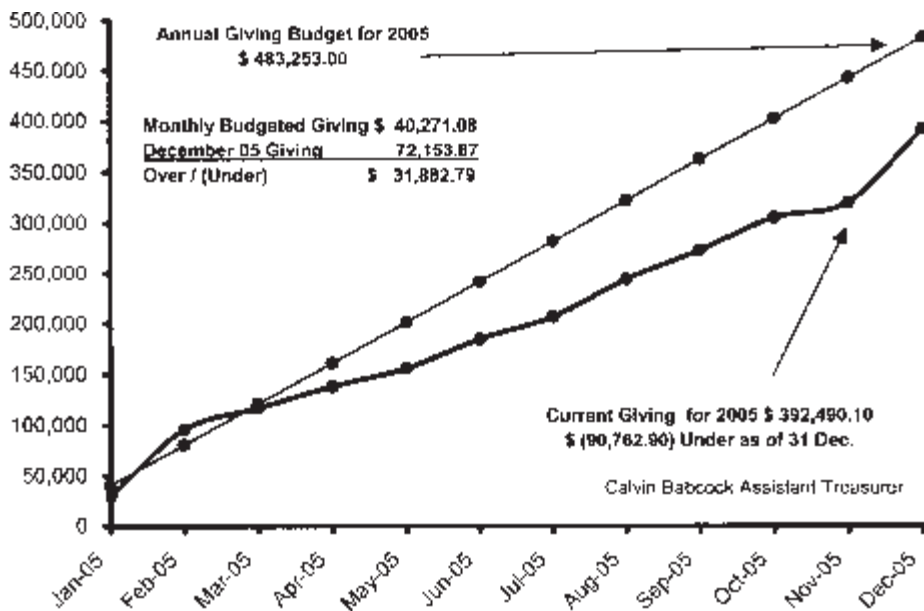
New members

Lost Creek, WV
Don Shackelford, pastor
Joined after baptism
Pete Seguin
Tracy Webber
Joined after testimony
Trena Kirby

Sunshine Mountain, MS
Ralph Hays, pastor
Joined after baptism
Andy Yenney
Joined after testimony
Elma Wilkinson

White Cloud, MI
Bernie Wethington, pastor
Joined after baptism
Larry Adams
Sherry Adams
Marva Shears

Current Giving 2005



THANK YOU
for the
year-end push in
giving. Your generosity
is greatly appreciated,
and your gifts support
the many ministries
of the
SDB Conference.

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Please see
Rob Appel's report on
page 21, and prepare
now for the:

**Mid-Year
General Conference
Offering**
February 25, 2006

Obituaries

Zwiebel.—Jaunita Zwiebel, 89, of Boulder, Colo., died of natural causes on October 25, 2005. She was born on March 25, 1916, in Salem, W.Va., the daughter of Oris Stutler and Velma June Bond. She married Rev. Rex E. Zwiebel in 1939.

Jaunita graduated from Salem College with a B.A. in Education. She was a gifted artist who pursued painting and crafts of many kinds over the years.

After her three children were mostly grown, she became the manager of the Alfred (N.Y.) University Bookstore. She then worked as a clerk at Crandall's Jewelry store in Alfred and eventually clerked at the Country Store in Alfred Station, N.Y.

Jaunita fulfilled her role as a pastor's wife by serving on many committees and hosting guests in their home.

The couple served SDB churches and fellowships in Hebron, Pa.; Lost Creek and Roanoke, W.Va.; and Buffalo and Alfred Station, N.Y. She was also a helpmate when Rex worked as the Executive Director of the SDB Board of Christian Education in Alfred Station, and as Dean of Ministerial Students in Plainfield, N.J.

Jaunita's humor was her trademark, and she enjoyed many wonderful friends in each of the places they served.

Survivors include two daughters, Marcia Zwiebel of Miamisburg, Ohio, and Gretchen Zwiebel of Erie, Colo. Her husband and a son, Michael, preceded her in death.

A Celebration of Life service was held on November 5, 2005, at the

Seventh Day Baptist Church of Boulder, with Rev. David Thorngate officiating.

Harris.—Lora Shimp Harris, 104, died on December 31, 2005, at her home in Bridgeton, N.J., following a brief illness. She had lived at the same Hopewell Township address for 76 years.

She was born on March 14, 1901, in Hancock's Bridge, N.J., the daughter of John Henry and Matilda (Allen) Shimp. She began her teaching career shortly after graduating from Salem High School in 1919.



***“Precious in the sight
of the Lord is the
death of His saints.”
(Psalm 116:15)***

Lora taught in New Jersey for four years in Salem and Mannington, and the former Wood School in Lower Stow Creek before taking a 20-year hiatus.

She returned to teaching in 1943 when there was a shortage of teachers during World War II. She taught 4th grade at the Hopewell Township School and later at the Crest School for a total of 28 years. New Jersey state law forced her to retire in 1971 when she turned 70.

In 1966, Lora formally received her teaching degree from Glassboro (N.J.) State College [now Rowan]. During her teaching career, she helped her husband, Judson H. Harris, on their family farm. The couple married in 1920, and he predeceased her in 1967.

Lora was an active member of the Shiloh, N.J., community, joining the Seventh Day Baptist Church there in 1925 and serving as a Sabbath School teacher. From 1933 until 1960, she was a member of the church's Ladies Quartet.

She was also a member of Matinee Musical, the Bridgeton Chapter of AARP, the Senior Citizens of Shiloh, the NEA, and the NJEA. Lora enjoyed making silk flower arrangements, crocheting, and needlepoint. She was especially excited to fly in a small plane as part of her 100th birthday celebration.

Survivors include one daughter, Matilda “Tillie” Dickinson of Stow Creek Township; her daughter-in-law, Velma Harris Wible; and five grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren, and six great-great-grandchildren. In addition to her husband, she was preceded in death by her only son, L. Hoover Harris, in 1958.

Funeral services were held on January 7, 2006, at the SDB Church of Shiloh. Rev. Donald Chroniger officiated, assisted by Lora's grandson, Rev. Lawrence Harris. Interment was in the church cemetery.

Death Notices

Steven L. Snyder, 95, of Coudersport, Pa., died on September 4, 2005.

Rev. Helen R. Green, 74, of Milton, Wis., died on January 15, 2006.

Give to those who gave so much.

PASTORS:

Leroy C. Bass C. Rex Burdick David S. Clarke

Ieland E. Davis Elmo Fitz Randolph Ralph L. Hays Sr.

Melvin G. Nida David C. Pearson Donald E. Richards

Don A. Sanford Victor W. Skaggs

Edgar E. Wheeler

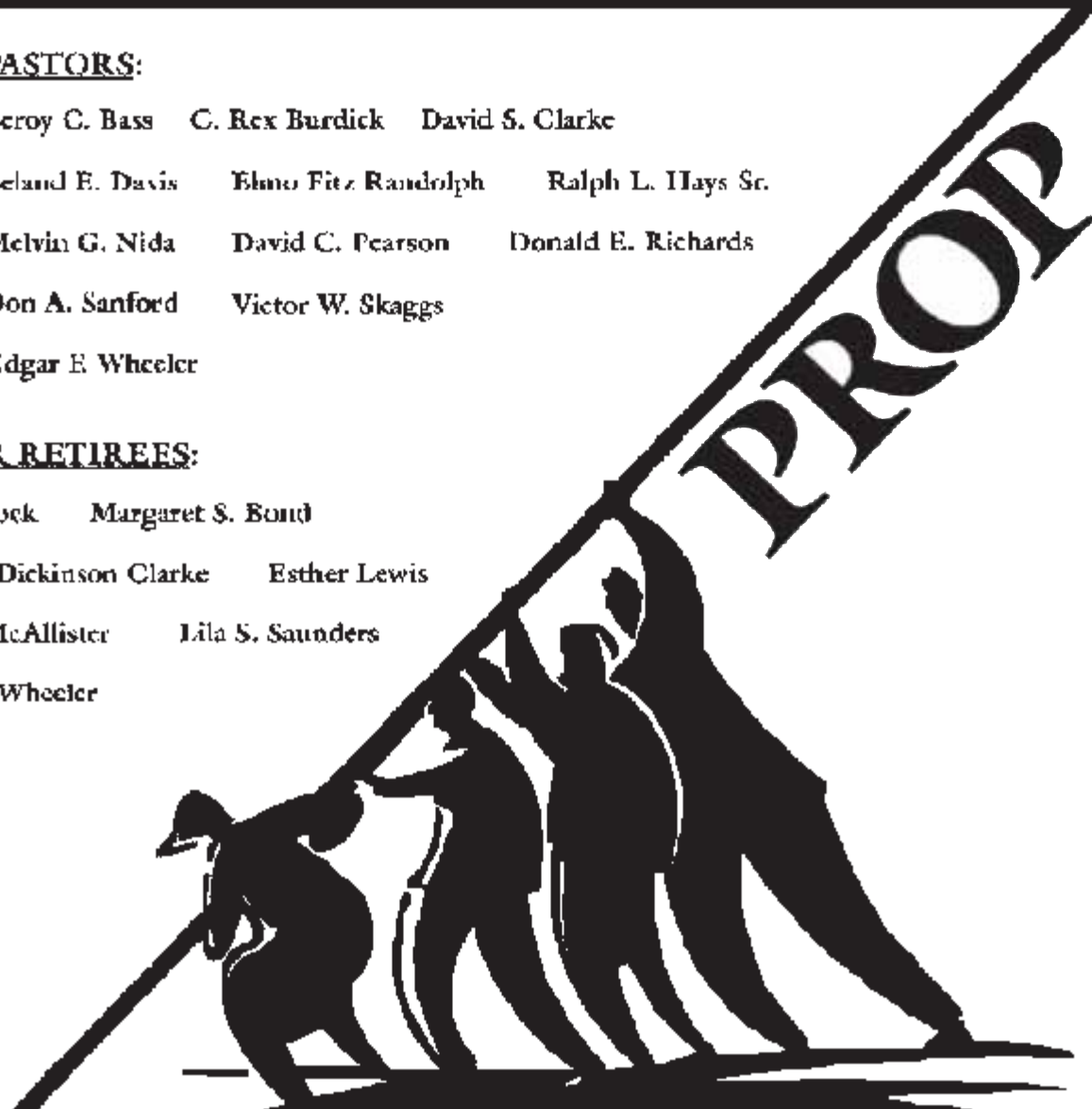
OTHER RETIREES:

Ida Babcock Margaret S. Bond

Ethel D. Dickinson Clarke Esther Lewis

Jean D. McAllister Lila S. Saunders

Ethel M. Wheeler



Pastors Retirement Offering Project

Contributions are needed for continuing support of SDB retired
pastors and denominational workers, and surviving spouses of pastors.

Please donate to PROP!

Please send your check to: PROP
Seventh Day Baptist Center, P.O. Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678

KEVIN'S

ORNER

Meeting important people

Thanks to various Conference meetings and church assignments, I've had the opportunity to travel many miles, visit many states, and even some other countries. (Our overseas journeys were courtesy of a special, generous friend of the ministry.)

On my travels, I have also enjoyed the privilege of seeing or meeting some "famous" people. Now, I don't want to overdo the "name-dropping," so let's just say I've nodded or spoken to celebrities, sportscasters, and national politicians.

Two "Ricks" of 2005

There are two names that I do want to mention. Janet and I encountered them both within a 10-day span last summer.

Prior to the Baptist World Congress gathering in England, we spent a few days touring Paris. To prepare for the trip, we watched several travel videos and took along a guidebook written by one of the video hosts. We even followed his advice in booking a hotel he featured on his "tour." We loved the location and the price.

Walking to the Eiffel Tower one evening, Jan spotted a couple across the narrow street.

"I think it's HIM!" she squeaked while tugging my arm. "Say something!!"

Before I could ask, "Are you sure?...", I blurted out, "Hey, RICK!"

The man and woman turned to look and stopped. I felt a bit foolish.

Jan managed, "Um, we love your books!" We mentioned where we were staying (thanking him for his suggestion), and our lost luggage situation, and then parted ways. A quick encounter, but travel host and writer Rick Steves seemed like a nice guy.

The following week at the Baptist Congress, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter was leading what was billed as the "World's Largest Sunday School." Two men wearing Hawaiian shirts and sunglasses slipped into their seats behind us.

As President Carter concluded the session, his Secret Service agents surrounded him to escort him out of the huge auditorium. I turned to the guys sitting behind us and asked, "So, where's *your* Secret Service?"

I had instantly recognized one of them as the keynote speaker from the previous night: Rick Warren, author of *The Purpose Driven Church*, and pastor of the 40,000-

member Saddleback Community Church in California.

Pastor Warren stuck out his hand to shake ours, inquiring who we were and where we were from.

"Wisconsin?" he replied. "I almost started a church up in Eau Claire!"

We shot back, "Hey, that's where our son is going to school this fall!"

After a few more pleasantries, it was time to head for the exit.

Another quick encounter with another Rick, and another good impression.

The most important

Now, to some of you Rick Warren fans, that chance meeting might be tough to beat. But I have to admit (and I'm not boasting here) that I've met someone even more important. We could call him the most important person in the world.

Have you met him?

He certainly attained celebrity—or at least notoriety—status "back in the day."

And at times when he desired more privacy, he would have donned sunglasses (had they been invented).

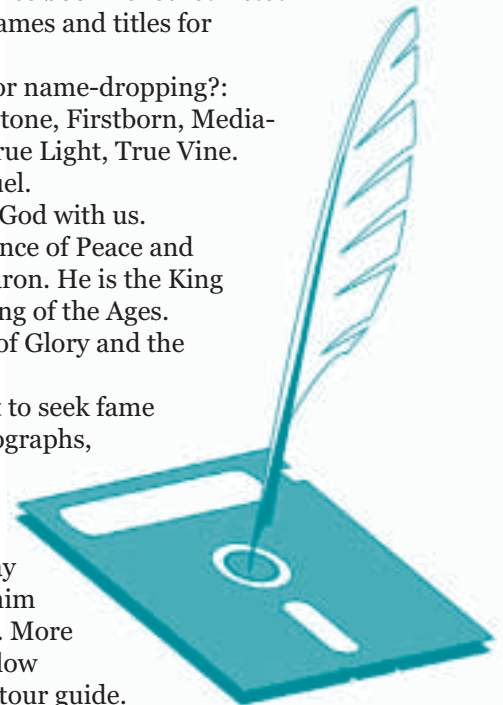
The name? Well, he went by several. In fact, one reference book I checked listed 102 different names and titles for this man.

How's this for name-dropping?: Advocate, Capstone, Firstborn, Mediator, Prophet, True Light, True Vine. Truth. Immanuel.

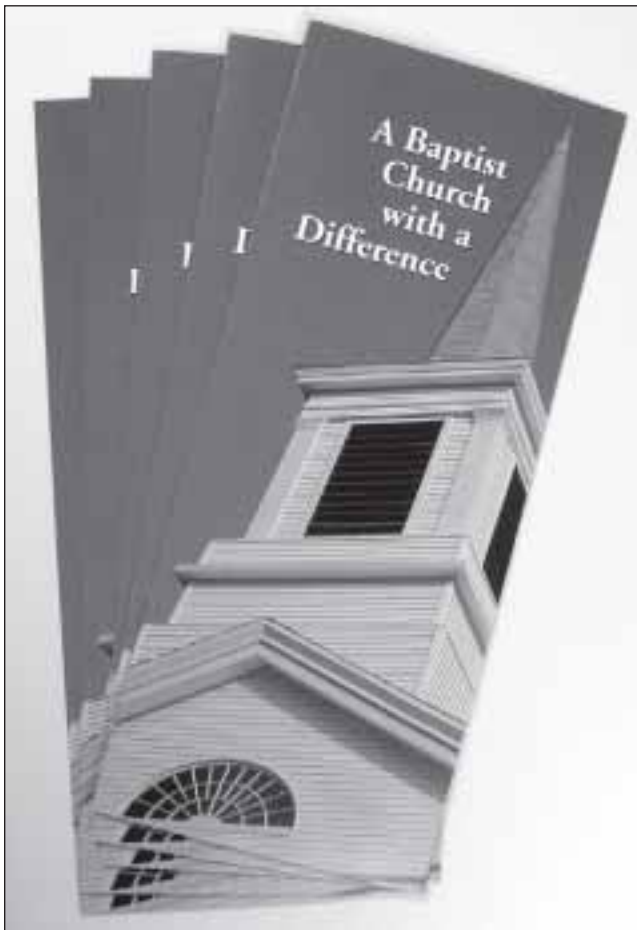
He is Jesus, God with us.

He is the Prince of Peace and the Rose of Sharon. He is the King of kings and King of the Ages. He is the Lord of Glory and the Lord of lords.

He came not to seek fame nor to give autographs, but to change lives and change the world. I pray that you meet him on your travels. More importantly, allow him to be your tour guide.



New tract reprint ready!



A New & Improved Baptist Church

Our best-selling tract, “A Baptist Church that’s a little different” has become “A Baptist Church with a Difference.”

It features a crisp new digital photo on the front, with the title in reverse type to stand out against the purplish-blue cloudless sky. The new back panel format makes it easy to mail to new contacts.

The content holds the same basic historical sketch, and our Statement of Belief.

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