



The
Sabbath
RECORDER

November 2008

News for and about Seventh Day Baptists

Adoption Papers

APPROVED

*A Father's
Promise*

*Would we
adopt again?*

*How can a church
do foster care?*

Description
Work
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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 a people with a difference.

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



Women's Society Robe of Achievement

2009 Nominations

The SDB Women's Society is accepting nominations for the Robe of Achievement for 2009. Please consider a woman in your church who meets the following 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*

A complete résumé must be submitted containing a life history, including her achievements and activities. Without a résumé in hand, the committee cannot make a competent choice among many nominees. If an individual has been nominated

before, and you still want that person considered, please resubmit the name as well as the updated résumé.

Send nominations to:
Laura Hambleton, Chair
SDB Robe Nominations
1568 Megan Bay Circle
Holly Hill, FL 32117

or apply on-line at: www.sdbwboard.org

Deadline:
March 31, 2009

For further information, contact or call
Laura Hambleton: (386) 677-8594



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A Father's Promise

by D. Scott Smith

The scariest girl I ever met

When we first met Amanda, my first impression was that she was one of the scariest little girls I had ever seen. Scary, because she was so sad and pitiful. She looked so fragile, it seemed she would break.

There she was—just turned 3—sitting on the colorful padded playroom floor of the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha. A tall chrome intravenous stand held the fluids that continually dripped through a line inserted in her leg.

She did not say a word. She couldn't walk. At 3 years old, she weighed 18 pounds.

Her blonde, broken hair was nearly white, and her skin was so pale that it seemed like you

could see right through her.

We greeted her and she looked back at us with light blue piercing eyes, but with a totally blank expression. It was as if no one was really there.

The road to Omaha

A few weeks earlier my wife Jean and I had decided to look into foster care. Our youngest had gone off to kindergarten and the house was empty.

I called the 800 number for information. In no time at all, a desperate social worker asked us to go to Omaha because they were going to discharge Amanda from the Medical Center.

Amanda was in the hospital because her mother thought she was

using up too many diapers. To this mother's mind, the most logical way to solve that problem was to withhold fluids. So for three months, Amanda had nothing to drink but what she could scoop out of the toilet with her hands.

Needless to say, she quickly became a very sick little girl. She was so dehydrated that she slipped into a semi-coma state.

Her mother's boyfriend finally saved her life by taking Amanda to a nearby rural hospital. She was quickly transported to a second in Grand Island, Nebraska, and then to Omaha. The ambulance attendants didn't think she would survive the night.

Two weeks after our first meeting with Amanda, the hospital finally did

release her. Brand new foster parents (we still had not had our training), we were probably just as frightened as she was.

Hospital staff members sat us down to explain Amanda's condition. The severe and prolonged dehydration had caused considerable brain damage. Her brain tissue had literally shrunk.

They told us that she would always be mentally low functioning. The frightening term they used was "borderline M.R." (mental retardation).

A father's promise

I will never forget carrying Amanda to the car. She was so tiny and so fragile, I must admit I was a bit overwhelmed by that precious little girl.

I made her a promise that I had no right to make. It was a "father's promise" and one that I could not be sure I could keep.

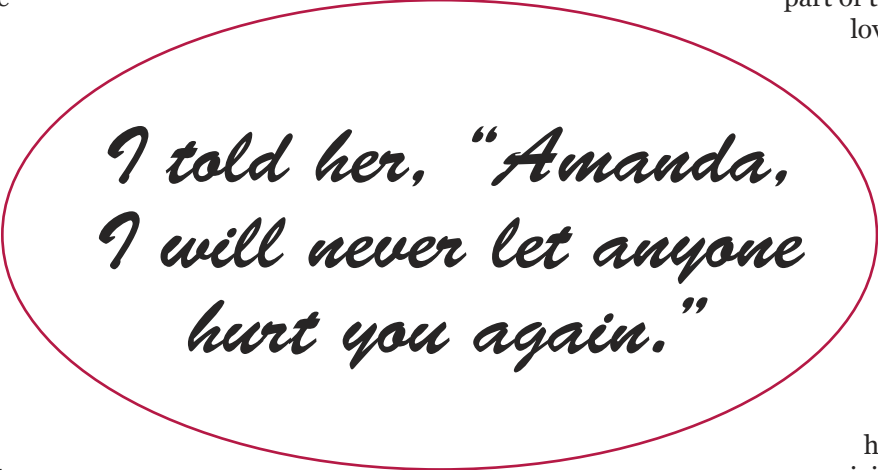
I told her, "Amanda, I will never let anyone hurt you again."

Fathers make promises all the time and most of the time we intend to keep them. Some are large and some are small. But we cannot always keep them because we are not in control. If you were a father in control, you would get to choose.

In the first chapter of Ephesians, we see the will of the only Father who is actually able to choose—

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him

before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us



I told her, "Amanda, I will never let anyone hurt you again."

in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace..." (Eph. 1:3-7, NIV).

Paul usually began his letters with a word of praise. In this case, he praised God because God had blessed them "with every spiritual blessing in Christ." But he quickly refocuses on God's fatherly choice—"For he chose us." Before the creation of the world, the Creator already had chosen you.

Orphaned!

After we had been Amanda's foster parents for a few months, her mother abandoned her. She visited for a little while, then left Nebraska and moved to the west coast where her other two children were living

with their grandmother. The state of Nebraska moved to terminate her parental rights and after a long legal process, that is what happened.

The day came when Amanda's legal parent became the State of Nebraska. She was technically an orphan, but now she could be adopted. She was now 5 and she had lived with us for two years. She was part of the family. We

loved her and so we filed all the papers.

The adoption hearing is a blur in my memory, except for one detail. The judge questioned me.

He asked, "Do you realize that this child, when adopted, will have all the rights and privileges of your other children? Do you understand

that she will have the right to inheritance that your other children have?"

After a number of other questions, he said, "Then I declare that she is today, Amanda Marie Ann Smith."

All are orphans

Here's the primary point. Just like Amanda, you and I are orphans in this world.

Just like Amanda, we all need to be adopted.

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," He has already chosen us!

If we will accept Him, we have a ready-made heavenly family. Our brother Jesus greets us as we arrive. He throws the robe of righteousness over our shoulders, puts his arm around us and calls out, "Abba, the little one is home!"

We who have been orphaned, abused and abandoned stand be-

fore the throne of Grace with Jesus at our side, and our Father speaks something we simply know is true: “My child... I will never let anything hurt you again.”

Oh, by the way, our daughter Amanda is 15 years old now. As to the medical professional’s diagnosis of “borderline mental retardation,” last year she was an honor roll student at high school. The child who was abused and neglected and near death is vibrant and alive.

Three years ago I had the incredible honor of accompanying her into the waters of baptism and heard her confess her faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It was a father’s dream come true.

Continued blessings

Believe it or not, our family was fortunate enough to adopt again last year. A little bit of “heaven” has joined our family.

Her name is Heaven, and if you have met her you know that it fits. She is blind, has Cerebral Palsy, and she has the sweetest spirit of any child I’ve ever met.

Another blessing the Smith family has been given is a church that supports foster care and adoption. They do it as an active ministry of the church.

Since we have been working with the Salem, W.Va., Seventh Day Baptist Church, two other homes have become foster families and six children have found “forever families” within the church.

First steps

There is a crying need! Many churches complain about the evil of abortion of unwanted children. Our church, I’m proud to say, has taken the positive step of encouraging adoptive families—both in their advocacy and their finances. [Please see the next article, a companion

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piece by Janet Thorngate.—Editor]

But even more, our church supports us in prayer and has become an extended family for our children. They have shared the love of Christ with children in need and your church can do that, too. I pray that you will. **SR**

Scott Smith is a member and former assistant pastor of the Salem, W.Va., SDB Church. He is now a foster-care recruiter for a faith-based statewide organization, and a former editor of The Sabbath Recorder.



*The growing Smith family.
Top row: Kevin, Jean, and Amanda.
Bottom: Carlie, Scott, Heaven, and Aaron.*

How can a church do foster care?

by Janet Thorngate, Salem, W.Va.

Sometimes a church prays for guidance in finding a new ministry. Sometimes one falls in their lap.

Sometimes we seek a means of revival (or even survival), then later look back and ask, “How did that happen?”

At a sad meeting of our church’s Christian Education Committee about seven years ago, the chairperson announced that she was praying for babies. A large crop of young people had graduated and left for college or gotten married. The few children left behind didn’t make much noise.

It was hard to decide how to put them into “classes”—now that we had nice new classrooms, which we had really needed when the new addition was first projected.

One couple was expecting a child, already named Ezra (though we didn’t know then that he’d be a prophet; his birth forecasting more to come). A girl named Patience (now in kindergarten) hadn’t been thought of yet, and we weren’t feeling very patient. We all prayed for babies.

Two years later I recalled that “prayer meeting” in the church newsletter, noting that so much had happened since, that it was hard to trace cause and effect. I added, “But the effect makes for wonderfully noisy worship services, an overflowing nursery, help needed for children’s church, and a shortage of babysitters when adults have meetings, choir practices, etc.!”



Our pastor had long encouraged the church to be an “extended family” for people who need brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, and grandparents.

The church had added a youth pastor, an after-school Kids’ Club, and a children’s choir. Baby showers, toddler showers, and “showers of blessing” included young people to help with the children—sometimes. I dared to ask, “What shall we pray for next?”

One thing the Christian Education Committee and the new Youth Ministry Advisory Group were praying for was help with how to deal with foster children. The new youth pastor and his wife had brought with them not only their own welcome children, but also valuable foster care experience from three other states.

Their process of becoming certified to do foster care in West Virginia turned out to be so frustratingly complicated that it enlisted the sympathy and prayer support of the whole congregation—and thus began our foster care ministry.

Along with the new foster children came new challenges: children who never learned how to behave in church, children who didn’t “fit” in

any age-grade class, children whose special needs we had no clue how to respond to.

Instead of scaring us off, however, these children’s enormous need for love seemed to mobilize the congregation. Before long, three other families had become certified as foster parents. It became clear that one of the best ways to help the children was to help their parents.

Our pastor had long encouraged the church to be an “extended family” for people who need brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, grandparents. Indeed that may have been the “ministry” that has sustained the congregation for over 200 years in this community. Yet somehow “foster family” seemed different.

The church sponsored a Sabbath afternoon forum with presentations from the agency that placed children in our foster homes. The administrator and case worker helped us all better understand the state’s foster care system and how it works (or doesn’t work) for the benefit of the chil-

dren—children who have been abused or neglected, or whose parents simply aren't able to care for them.

One of the greatest needs is for respite care—respite for the foster parents. Babysitters have to be certified by the agency before the children can be left with them. They take the training, get background checks, etc.

To care for the children in your own home requires inspection of the house to certify that it is safe: smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, appropriate sleeping arrangements for overnight visits.

To transport foster children for church events, retreats, or other activities requires that the drivers get fingerprinted and have their driving record checked.

At the time of the first forum, we had seven foster children in the church family. Ten people applied to become approved babysitters through the agency—a tangible way to assist the three sets of parents at home and through church programs.

One of our most effective programs turned out to be a revival of one we had years ago. This was when our now-young adults—who are starting to have babies—were small children. Sometimes called “Parents Night Out,” sometimes called “Kids Night Out,” it is simply an evening when children come to the church for fun and games (or help with homework) and, of course, a light supper or snack. The parents can then go out to dinner, or to the grocery store, or whatever they need to do—alone. All parents need respite care!

Another surprise was to discover that when new foster children are placed in a home, often under emergency circumstances, they are likely to come with only the clothes on their backs. Sometimes the state provides clothing vouchers, but often not.

In West Virginia, the first support check for foster care may not arrive

for three months! So the church created a Foster Family Loan Fund from which parents may borrow \$300 per child to make sure they have whatever is needed until the first state check comes.

One of the benefits of having foster children among us is to help our own children appreciate their loving homes and learn to reach out to children who don't know how to love. It isn't easy to teach a Sabbath School

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class with “standard lessons” that presuppose that everyone had last year's curriculum and knows certain Bible stories already. And how do you respond to the child who blurts out during the Sabbath worship children's story, “Who is God??”

The Christian Education Committee decided to start from scratch and develop our own set of learning objectives for each class, trying to assure that everyone gets the basics of Christian nurture, regardless of when in the sequence. We also discovered that there are other ways to place children in classes than by age or grade. These strategies may not be acceptable in public school but they may better serve the children.

How exciting to have to divide our too-big preschool class into two or three groups—and then regroup a couple months later because we suddenly have different children!

We've lost count of the number of foster children, from infants to teenagers, who have gone through these three homes in the past five years. Some were with us fleetingly. Some came, won our hearts, left and broke our hearts, only to return again—sometimes several times, as parents tried or didn't try hard enough to comply with the state's criteria for reuniting the family.

Six of these kids have found “forever families” in the church through adoption or permanent guardianship. Two of them recently requested baptism and are now active members of the church.

What a joy it is to have others, now living with relatives outside the state, return for summer camp with us or visit on Sabbath.

Warning! The foster care “bug” is catching. As our Association summer camp program was adjusted to accommodate foster kids, several suddenly appeared from a sister church. Yes, they came with special needs, but also with a qualified foster Dad to make their attendance “legal.” His expertise proved invaluable to the staff, and he enjoyed the out-of-the-city respite with new Christian friends.

Our newest foster child came to one of our families as a three-month-old “shaken baby.” He may be blind for life. He may never walk. No one knows yet. He needs love and we are loving him and the caring parents.

“Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world.” He let them come to him. He said that we must all come to our heavenly Father as little children. That's what it's all about. **SR**

Janet Thorngate is a member of the Seventh Day Baptist Church in Salem, W.Va. The former youth pastor referred to is Rev. D. Scott Smith, author of the previous article, “A Father's Promise.”

Our adoption story

From decisions and debt to fulfillment

by Shay and Brenda Rankhorn, Paint Rock, Alabama

After several fruitless years of trying to have more children, we decided to pursue adopting. We knelt down together and asked God for His guidance and help as we started the process.

We chose domestic adoption (in the U.S.) as opposed to foreign adoption (outside the country). Foreign adoption included having to travel abroad to get the child, stay several weeks in that country, and pay higher overall costs.

Decisions, decisions...

We then had to decide *which method* of domestic adoption we were going to use.

Adoption in the United States can be done in at least three different ways:

- **Private** (couple to birthmother through a lawyer)
- **Agency** (couple to birthmother through social worker and lawyer), or
- **State** (couple to birthmother through social services case-worker and lawyer)

After reviewing the options we decided to use an adoption agency. We chose a Christian agency in Birmingham, Ala., called “Lifeline Children’s Services.”

Two things helped us to choose this particular agency. First, they were Christian. And second, we would not have to pay any adoption fees—except for the application and fingerprinting costs—before we received the child.

Adopting helped us understand God’s longing to have a family; so much so that He wanted to adopt. He already had a son—the most perfect Son there ever was or is. Why would He want more?

...and more decisions

Following the application and paying the initial fee, we found out there were many more decisions for us to make. How much contact did we want with the birth family? What sex, age, race, disabilities, etc?

What if the background of the child’s parents was unknown? What if the birthmother had been on drugs, or drinking, or had been raped? Would we take siblings?

But first, this home study

Before we could even make these decisions we had to do a home study. This involved a physical tour of our home, interviews with each adoptive parent, as well as interviews with others living in the home.

Our home study was not considered complete until we had written our autobiographies, had medical exams, got fingerprinted, received character references, and filled out questionnaires. The purpose, of course, was to determine the

suitability of the parents in regards to the future care of the adopted child.

It took us about eight months to complete all the requirements the first time we adopted.

But here’s the good news: it took only one interview and some paperwork for the second one. Yes, the second time around was much easier!

All total, it took us 13 months before we brought our first adopted son, Benjamin, into our home, and another three months before his adoption was finalized. It took only 12 months to get our second adopted son, Zachariah, into our home.

A real faith builder

Adoption has been a faith builder. When we first decided to adopt it was with the realization that we had two children in college, and did not know where we would get the money. We realized that if we were going to be able to afford the process, it would be because God provided.

The Adoption Home Study includes:

- Physical home tour
- Parent Interviews
- Family interviews
- Autobiographies
- Medical exams
- Fingerprinting
- Character References
- Questionnaires

This will take some time!!

Seeing our older children take care of and love the boys is good training for them, and has opened them to the idea of adopting in the future.

*Adding much to the family:
Benjamin and
Zachariah Rankhorn*



Though we worked hard making cheesecakes, holding yard sales, having a spaghetti dinner, and even arranging a benefit concert, more than once we despaired of ever raising the funds. Each time we would go to the Lord in prayer and He would bless our faith with another gift of money.

The money came in

Anonymous church members would donate periodically. One time the day after praying over the finances, an old friend who had not answered our fundraising letter (sent six months prior) called up “out of the blue” to say she was sending a check for \$5,000!

Then we found out the Seventh Day Baptist Women’s Society was donating money, and that there was an adoption fund the Memorial Board managed. The adoption-related refund we received from our tax return was used to start the process for our second son.

Each time God had the money ready for us; He was simply getting us ready for it.

Was it worth it?

Our two little boys have brought us closer together as a couple. As we train and raise them, as we discuss our anxieties, and as we share the cute things they say and do each day, it seems like we appreciate

each other more as there are continual opportunities to lighten the other’s load.

Seeing our older children take care of and love the boys is good training for them, and has opened them to the idea of adopting in the future. Seeing the joy others get from our little ones helps us realize again and again how the journey of adoption was worth it.

Our spiritual adoption

This journey has also made us think about our spiritual adoption.

Adopting helped us understand God’s longing to have a family; so much so that He wanted to adopt. He already had a son—the most perfect Son there ever was or is. Why would He want more?

Ephesians 1:5 says that He adopted us “according to the good pleasure of His will.”

Just as we “rescued” our boys from living in a potentially abusive, godless home, so God comes along and says, “I want you in My family; I have so much love to share. You can have My love and I will take care of all your needs.”

Isn’t it comforting to know that we don’t have to be perfect (like Jesus) for God to love us? He loves us just the way we are—just like we love our precious little boys. **SR**



*Shay and
Brenda Rankhorn
talking about adoption at Conference.*

Would we adopt again?

by Steve and Becky Crouch, Bay Area, Calif.

We started out our married life agreeing that we would have two children, and God did bless us with two wonderful daughters. But God had more planned for us.

The Lord gave Becky a burden for children at a young age, specifically adoption. Steve was content with two children, but slowly God began a work in his heart as well.

Becky's desire was to adopt a baby from China, but living on a pastor's salary we could not afford this. At that time we didn't know of any adoption assistance programs to help make that possible.

We checked with our county, and at that time, adoption would take years. So in 1991 we began our journey as foster parents to about 35 children. Along the way God blessed us with another birth daughter.

After being foster parents for seven years, a caseworker brought a very special frightened 8-year-old girl to our home. (Of course we believe God brought her.)

In her past she had had a Christian neighbor she could go to where she felt safe. When she learned we were Christians, she was so happy to be in our home. It didn't take long for us to fall in love with her.

After being with us three years we were able to adopt her. She was a challenge at times, but in her 14th year her past abuse brought out a lot of anger and rebellion.

She began running away, and the last time she left she was able to make connection with her birth family. She moved from one family member to another where she received too much freedom. She thought this would make her happy.



Celebrating after Lindsay's baptism (left to right, in front): Natalie, Heidi, Lindsay, Victoria, and Tiffany. In back: Sarah, Ashley, Steve, and Becky.

But God's grace is sufficient. She is now 18 years old and married. And in the last year she has "come back" to us by calling and visiting occasionally. She tells us that she is grateful for our influence in her life, and knows she is different because of it. She and her husband are involved in a church near where they live.

All through the difficult years with our daughter, we never stopped loving her. And we never stopped praying for her and believing that God had His hand on her and that she was going to turn out okay. Our prayer was that she would become the adult the Lord wanted her to be. We see this in progress.

Often when adoption is mentioned it brings to mind cute babies, and this is wonderful. If you are thinking of adoption, we would like you to consider opening your hearts to other possibilities besides infants.


Consider adopting older children or becoming foster parents. Not all foster children become available for adoption, but there are hundreds of older children who have

experienced abuse and neglect who need loving Christian parents.

We believe God calls us to take care of the orphans (James 1:27). We know everyone is not able to adopt or become foster parents, but maybe you can give to the Timothy Mackintosh Adoption Fund through the SDB Memorial Board. This program offers financial help to adopting parents.

Or if you know a family that has taken children in their home, offer to host the kids for an evening or weekend. This break is a tremendous help for the parents. God has blessed us with many such people over the years and has made it possible for us to continue our ministry to children.

You may ask, "Is adoption difficult and would you do it again?" It can be stressful and painful at times, but not all the time.

We believe our birth children have learned to give of themselves to serve others. And we have learned and grown, and our lives are much richer as a result. Yes, we would adopt again. 



The ring, and 'God Bless you and Mrs. Chambers'

First, the ring. It is a ruby ring, chosen joyously with my husband last year to celebrate our 40th anniversary. On June 18, 2007, Rich slipped the ring on my right hand and I rarely took it off.

As June 18 drew near this year, I realized I wasn't wearing my ring. Looking for it in its normal resting place, and then in every reasonable place I could imagine, I panicked. I couldn't remember when I'd last worn it.

I traced my steps and our travels. There'd been much to distract me from thinking about the ring since we'd left our Florida home to come north for the summer.

I finally decided it had to be either on my Florida bedstand or in a motel room in Mobile, Alabama. All the while, I prayed and kept my mouth shut, hoping Rich wouldn't notice my bare finger. (I'd lost jewelry before and prayed, and it would be found—even six months later.)

Our move back to Florida was memorable. We were transporting our belongings "for good," having sold Rich's boyhood farmhouse to our youngest son, Chet. Still, the first thing I did was to look on the bedstand. No ring.

"Lord, I know *You* know where it is. I'm counting on *You*." This was on August 15.

Let me share excerpts from my journal dated August 17: "Thank *You* for showing me my 'lost' ring on the bathroom floor near the corner by the candle stand."

Immediately after I wrote my gratitude, I read that day's Scripture from the *Helping Hand*, Proverbs 3:13-15. "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom... for the merchan-

dise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her."



Story number two. I hadn't really mourned her passing yet; it didn't seem quite real. But the photo inside my Women's Board packet brought tears to my eyes.

Judith Chambers had finished her life on this earth on March 14, the article said. I knew her only a few days. Margie Jacob had told me I would love her, and I did.

It was April 2006 in Nova Scotia when I first met Judith. She was in the meeting room, getting ready to preside. Experiencing headaches and in mourning herself (she lost her husband six months before), this courageous President of the North American Baptist Women's Union greeted me with a smile that made me feel like we'd been best friends for years.

During the next two days I would have a few more encounters with my new friend. Then when she was at the SDB General Conference to speak at the Women's Banquet the follow-

ing summer, I introduced her to my mom. Judith invited us to come together to visit in her home on Prince Edward Island, Canada.

Several months later, however, Mrs. Chambers was diagnosed with cancer. We stayed in touch by e-mail. Around the same time my mom had a liver biopsy. As a result of that biopsy, she suffered pain whenever she sneezed. I suggested that Mom pray for Mrs. Chambers every time she sneezed because it always helps ease our own pain when we pray for someone else. Plus, I said, "Whenever I sneeze, I'll pray for both of you."

After six weeks, Mom's pain was gone. Then I found myself saying to anyone who sneezed, "God bless you and Mrs. Chambers." For me, sneezing continues to be a call to prayer.

Judith would be pleased to know that even her passing served to inspire someone. It was while reading about her that my mom gained the courage to travel alone to General Conference this year, little knowing the honors that would be bestowed on her there—a surprise 80th birthday party hosted by all her children, and receiving the Women's Society Robe of Achievement.

These stories may seem unrelated, but there is a connection. Accompanying "The Tie" (NABWU's newsletter) in which I saw Judith's picture, was the NABWU prayer guide for November. The editor writes that the strategic objective is to encourage prayer as a vehicle for making changes in the world.

Sounds strangely like this year's SDB General Conference theme, don't you think? **SR**

World Day of Prayer

**Attn: SDB Keyworkers or
Women's Group Leaders**

**Monday, November 3, marks
the annual World Day of Prayer.**

Each church clerk was sent a letter containing the "**Baptist World Alliance Day of Prayer 2008**" pamphlet. This provides information that may be helpful to plan your Day of Prayer on the local level. A special program or collection can be taken on any day in November to collect these funds.

For accounting purposes, we request that contributions be sent to the BWA through the SDB Women's Board no later than December 15, 2008. Please make your contribution check(s) payable to the **SDB Women's Society** and send to Enid Nobles, Treasurer, 9 Little Pond Trail, Ormond Beach FL 32174. It is important to note that it is for the "World Day of Prayer" on the memo line.



The Baptist World Alliance and the North American Baptist Women's Union consider the needs of many and carefully chooses the recipients of offerings each year. Please refer to the pamphlet for information about some of the projects your offering has benefited. Or go to www.bwawd.org for details.)

Please note that we have also included the World Day of Prayer History for you to make copies of and share with the women of your church.

We thank you for your participation in this worthy cause this November.

In His service,
Cathy Camenga, Secretary
SDB Women's Society



EST. 1964

**SUMMER CHRISTIAN
SERVICE CORPS**

Students: Are you a high school senior or in college, and willing to serve with next year's Summer Christian Service Corps?

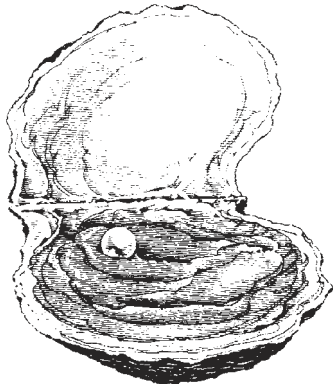
Churches: Do you wish to host an SCSC team for service and outreach?

Applications for team members and church projects are on the SDB Conference website at seventh-daybaptist.org. Please print the applications from the website and send all completed forms (for both members and projects) to: SCSC Committee, c/o

Milton SDB Church, 720 E. Madison Ave., Milton WI 53563.

All team member applications must be postmarked by January 10, 2009, and all church project applications must be postmarked by January 31, 2009. There will be NO exceptions.

If you have any questions, please contact the Milton Seventh Day Baptist Church at the above address, or e-mail the SCSC Committee at scsc@miltonsdb.org.



Clarke a real gem

By definition, a pearl might be considered a “gem,” and a string of gems could be considered a “necklace.”

Rev. Herman D. Clarke appeared in a “Pearls” page in the mid-’90s in relation to the role of a father, then again as a conductor on the Orphan Train of the early 1900s. With some additional exposure in the January 2008 *Sabbath Recorder*, Rev. Clarke would almost qualify as a necklace.

For about 16 years, Herman Clarke, a Seventh Day Baptist pastor, was far more than a conductor on a train, for he was also the placing agent for the Children’s Aid Society of New York City. Accompanied by Miss Anna Laura Hill (who looked after the girls), Clarke conducted over a thousand orphans or abandoned children from New York to new locations largely in the Midwest.

The occasion for this month’s Pearl was precipitated by a presentation made at the annual Founders’ Day dinner at the Milton, Wis., SDB Church back in the spring. The keynote speaker was Clark Kidder, author of the book *Emily’s Story: The Brave Journey of an Orphan Train Rider*.

This book centered around the life of Kidder’s grandmother—Emily Florence Reese—who was born in Brooklyn, N.Y., in 1892, the tenth child of her parents.

For some unknown reason her father abandoned the family, and her mother was imprisoned for a short while for non-payment of a

**HOMES WANTED
FOR CHILDREN**

A Company of Orphan Children of Different
Ages Will Arrive In Mapleton, Iowa.

Thursday, June 16

The Distribution will take place
at Opera House at 10:30 a. m.

The object of the coming of these children is to find homes in your midst, especially among farmers, where they may enjoy a happy and wholesome family life, where kind care, good example and moral training will fit them for a life of self-support and usefulness. They come under the auspices of the New York Children's Aid Society, by whom they have been tested and found to be well meaning and willing boys and girls.

The conditions are that they shall be properly clothed and treated as members of the family, sent to school according to the school law of the state, and remain in the family until they are eighteen years of age. At the expiration of the time specified it is hoped that arrangements can be made whereby they be able to remain in the family indefinitely. The society reserves the right to remove a child at any time for just cause, and agrees to remove any found unsatisfactory after being notified.

Applications may be made to some of the following well known citizens who have agreed to act as local committees to aid the agent in securing homes:

W. H. CHRISMAN, J. E. SCOTT, H. P. WILBUR, L. W. PENN, J. B. WELCH, T. B. LUTZ, F. GRIFFIN, H. S. GILLASPIE.

If the Children are not all taken at 10:30 a. m. an adjourned meeting will be held at 1:30 p. m.

REMEMBER THE TIME AND PLACE
Come Out and Hear the Address.

H. D. CLARKE, Agt.

Orphan Train ad for Mapleton, Iowa, June 16, 1904

debt. So in a sense, Emily was not technically orphaned but abandoned at 3 years of age. She was placed in “The Home for Destitute Children and Industrial School by the Brooklyn Branch of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.”

An important character in this chronicle was Rev. Clarke. His unflagging interest and support of orphans placed many in foster homes beginning in 1900.

In his own summary of his life, Rev. Clarke listed his birth as November 26, 1850, in Otsego County, New York. He was educated at DeRuyter Institute and Alfred Univer-

sity, and taught school for a number of years.

Clarke studied music at Lyon’s Musical Academy in 1872. From his chapter called “Music,” he wrote, “Only Christianity gives us harmonies worth playing and singing. Modern jazz and fox trots are simply execrable and nerve racking. Jazz bands murder the art!”

He also wrote that his instructor guaranteed Clarke a salary of \$800 to teach music at an academy as soon as he finished the course. Clarke noted that at that time, our pastors were getting a yearly salary from \$250 to \$600, and in those days the largest salary he ever had was \$400, with an average not over \$325.

Apparently some of the girls in Clarke’s class noticed that he came to teach without a necktie. He later received by mail a box of 13 silk ties made from material from the girls’ dresses. He then went to class with a change of ties for each day.

He taught school for awhile in Leonardsville, N.Y., where he played organ at the church from 1875-1877. He was ordained there as a deacon in 1878.

Clarke began preaching on occasion, and for four summers he sang with Gospel quartets. In 1883 he was ordained to the Gospel ministry by the Verona (N.Y.) SDB Church.

Four years later Clarke became pastor of the Independence, N.Y., SDB Church (the site of my first pastorate in 1950). From there he went to the Dodge Center, Minn., SDB church in 1893. He served the church in Garwin, Iowa, for a short time then returned to Dodge Center where he began his orphan work in 1898. That became his full-time ministry in the year 1900.

Herman Clarke also helped to establish a Children's Aid society in Cincinnati, Ohio, and the Haskell Home for Orphan Children in Battle Creek, Mich.

I had known of the Orphan Train movement because one of our Milton neighbors, a member of the church, had been a passenger on the Orphan Train. And, as historian, I was asked to do research for people seeking information on some of the orphans who settled in the Milton area.

One of those seekers was Clark Kidder. His grandmother became a passenger on the train in 1906 under the care of Rev. Clarke. The term "conductor" is a misnomer, for his responsibility extended to finding homes for each of the children, primarily in the rural communities of the Midwest. It is reported that at the beginning of each journey, Clarke would pray, "Lord, these are the little ones in need, and Thou art the God of the orphan. Open the way for them."

Placement of the children was primarily in rural areas, where

**Rev. Herman
Clarke's unflagging
interest and
support of orphans
placed many
in foster homes
beginning
in 1900.**

people would gather on a given date with the children introduced while sitting on the stage. Individuals or families would make their selection, almost like county fair judgments were made for livestock.

Sometimes the matches were not satisfactory, and a child would end up in two or more homes. Rev. Clarke kept track of most of the children, and his letters to them numbered into the thousands. Even after he ceased his role as conductor he

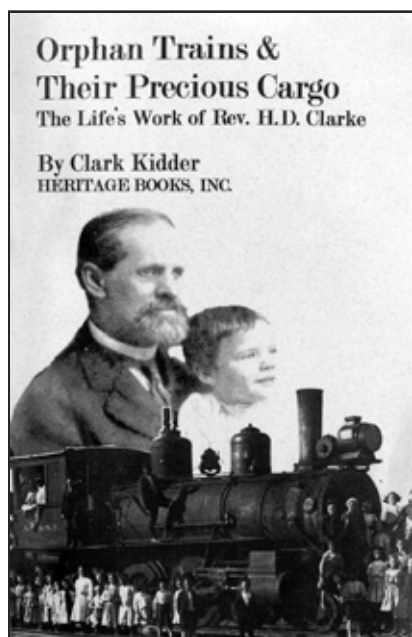
was called upon to guide the changes or removals from unsatisfactory situations.

Herman Clarke's journal was passed on to his daughter, Mabel. She married Charles Sayre of Albion, Wis., and was mother to Walter Sayre who owned a garage in Milton and was active in the Milton SDB Church.

The obituary for Rev. Clarke included this tribute:

"Elder Clarke was a man of strong convictions, deep feeling, and unswerving loyalty to his ideals. He had spent the final years of his life at the home of his daughter Mabel in Albion, Wis., spending much time corresponding with many of his former wards who looked to him for counsel and encouragement, and in whom he remained interested to the last."

Clark Kidder, author of *Emily's Story*, not only had access to his grandmother's experience, but considerable insight into the key role that Herman Clarke had in this unique phase of American history. **SR**



Closing words from Rev. Clarke

(From his autobiographical journal, found in Clark Kidder's book, *Orphan Trains and Their Precious Cargo*)

To my dying day I shall have deepest interest in the work of placing and caring for orphan or homeless children. Some dear friends say it was the greatest work of my life. The God of the orphan is the judge of that.

The work has brought me greatest happiness and in a few cases, great grief and misunderstanding, or rather disappointment. The thousands of letters from them and their homes all these years testify to the success of it, and to their appreciation in so many cases. They will remember him, who turned the tides of their lives for the better, and for eternity.

If God in His mercy shall give me a place in heaven, I hope to see among the redeemed, many of these souls who were snatched from poverty and woe and given a home with advantages on earth, and grew up respectable citizens.

Grace and peace to my grandchildren,
Herman D. Clarke

May 2nd, 1917
15 Read Terrace
Battle Creek, Michigan



Velma Taylor receives Crystal Apple

Velma Taylor of the West Palm Beach, Fla., SDB Church is the recipient of the Crystal Apple Award as the 2008 Sabbath School Teacher of the Year.

The award was announced during General Conference at Carthage College in Kenosha, Wis., this past August. Velma received the honor—consisting of a framed certificate and a crystal apple—during the awards presentation on Sabbath Day.

People in West Palm Beach know Velma as a resourceful teacher who has served her classes faithfully for the last 25 years. She works hard to help her class understand the lesson by finding methods and objects that help even adults discover new insights from familiar Bible passages.

Her skill in teaching makes some students think she can make every lesson, no matter how difficult or complicated, come alive.

Beyond the classroom, Velma has served as church treasurer, pianist, and as a member of the church's Board of Directors. As the Miami, Fla., SDBs were working to plant a church in West Palm Beach, she was one of the people who took the goal to heart and became a worker for the harvest.

Velma has modeled her Christian walk and covenant lifestyle by serving as a mentor for others through the years. Members of her church see her as a model of humility and modesty—a trait clearly displayed in her attitude and demeanor at General



Velma Taylor holds her Crystal Apple Award as Sabbath School Teacher of the Year.

People in West Palm Beach know Velma as a resourceful teacher who has served her classes faithfully for 25 years.

Conference when she received the award, shaking her head in disbelief and wondering why anyone would have bothered to nominate her.

The Board of Christian Education was pleased to have the privilege to name Velma Taylor as this year's award recipient. Many other worthy candidates were nominated, and we hope their churches will nominate them again.

If you see a good Sabbath School teacher in your church, please nominate the teacher for the 2009 award. You can discover more about the program on the BCE website: www.EducatingChristians.org.

Scripture Memory Honor Roll

Three churches were added to the 2008 Scripture Memory Honor Roll. They are:

- All Nations SDB Church in Gardena, CA

- Metro Atlanta SDB Church in Hiram, GA
- Middle Island SDB Church in New Milton, WV

Each of these churches had a participation rate in the Scripture Memory Program that exceeded 50 percent of their average worship attendance. In other words, *a lot* of people in those churches committed to memorizing portions of Scripture—and followed through!

While the challenge of the Honor Roll is not easy, three churches made it this year. Will your church be listed on the Honor Roll in 2009? See how many people you can help memorize the verses.

Memorize a different way

Go to page 24 to see a different way to fulfill the Memorization requirements. **SR**



Trials test Burundi

by Kirk Looper

The Seventh Day Baptist work in Burundi has been in operation for less than a decade. They already have over 28 churches existing within their Conference.

However, these churches are not operating without trouble. In some cases the trouble came from inside the congregation, while other groups were troubled by those outside the Conference. In either case it is wonderful that the Conference leadership was able to assist them in most cases.

Along with the problems caused by individuals, they were plagued with attacks from whole groups outside the SDB arena. **Other denominations** tried to destroy our churches; the **government** required additional work to gain and retain their registration; and in the northern part of the country, **rebels** disrupted the work of the Gospel.

During 2005-2006, their General Secretary, Gilbert Nduwayo, was kidnapped. A demand for a ransom of \$4,000 was given to the Conference for his release.

The last action against them was a death threat that actually ran Secretary Nduwayo out of the country.

He lived in Kampala, Uganda, for many months. After returning to Burundi, he found that his possessions had been thrown out of his home so the place could be rented by someone else.

With all of these discouragements, Gilbert Nduwayo continued to work with strength and determination that was a good example for the Conference members. He was able to pull through the illness associated with the kidnapping, went through the discomfort of living as a refugee in a strange country, and was able to re-establish his family after being in Uganda for so long. Why do things need to be so complicated?

The work continues with some help from members of the USA and Canada Conference. Over the past two years, we have received over \$2,000 from individuals to help with the recovery and development of the work in Burundi. They continue to need funds to rebuild parts of their Conference. We ask that financial support and prayers be offered for these hard-working people.

They need assistance to purchase plots of land for 14 churches. The cost for each plot is \$314. Use of the buildings would extend outside of the worship time on Sabbath. A building is often used for community meetings and schools.

Of the original 28 churches, only four have enough funds to operate an official school. The other churches would like to have schools, but their plots of land are not large enough nor are the buildings. They will need to purchase more land to get the schools.

The buildings are not inexpensive either. While the bricks they use to construct the walls are made by hand, the roofing sheets are purchased. The average cost for the sheets is \$506 per building. Each sheet of steel roofing costs \$8.50.

These are the prices for those outside their capital, Bujumbura. Inside the capital city, the cost is much greater. The plot of land for a building is as high as \$13,685.

It would be great if the leadership could afford to purchase the land and build an office in Bujumbura. However, as you can see, it is very expensive and they do not have the funds.

They continue to look for support for these buildings. In this troubled land, every congregation that is organized and developed is a tremendous step toward the goals of the SDB Conference of Churches in Burundi.

Beyond the buildings, we see other needs for the congregations. They need study materials and books. These can be purchased in the religious bookstores in Bujumbura at reasonable costs, but it would be better if they were prepared by the Burundi SDB Conference so the proper beliefs and polity can be addressed.

They need a computer, printer, and photocopier to accomplish this task. We are using some of the SDB Bible lessons that were developed in the past by Lester Osborn, Leon Lawton, and Lila Saunders. I appreciate these people who had the desire and time to prepare these lessons. **SR**

Every congregation that is organized and developed is a tremendous step toward the goals of the SDB Conference in Burundi.



the BEACON

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

Nov. 2008

The Plastic Christian

by Christopher Davis, Marlboro, N.J.

“Throw off your old evil nature and your former way of life, which is rotten through and through, full of lust and deception. Instead, there must be a spiritual renewal of your thoughts and attitudes. You must display a new nature because you are a new person, created in God’s likeness—righteous, holy, and true.

“So put away all falsehood and ‘tell your neighbor the truth’ because we belong to each other” (Ephesians 4:22-25, NLT).

I would like to testify to my current relationship with God.

Lately, I have been trying not to be a “plastic Christian.” Plastic Christians are those who just fit into the mold. They play the part, sing the tune, do their share, and act like everyone thinks they should act.

They are pretending not to be jaded—in absolutely no way, shape or form. To me, that is lying to others, yourself, and God.

I was a plastic Christian. I sang all the songs, said all the right words, walked the walk—but it all felt like a big cover-up. I looked up to all of the adults in the church and saw nothing but sturdy fortresses in Christ.

Knowing that I was not the “fortress” that I wanted to be, I covered

it up and pretended like I was. I didn’t want to be that “jaded youth.” I felt that if people knew my faults, they would judge and look down on me.

I compensated for myself, saying, “Nobody’s perfect. I still serve the same God.”

Truth is, I was a plastic Christian



with a nicely formed shell over my faults.

Realizing this was a big wake-up call for me. Hiding your problems does not make them go away. Like the child who cleans his room by shoving everything under the bed, the problem is far from solved.

Without others around you to help, the problem will just get worse

and worse until you cannot stop.

1 Corinthians 12:26-27 states, “If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad. Now all of you together are Christ’s body, and each of you is a separate and necessary part of it.”

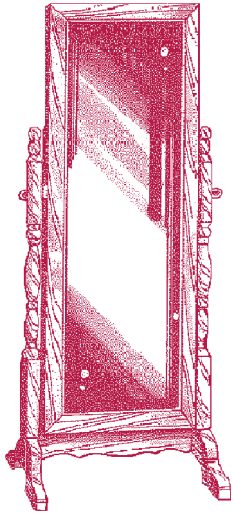
A plastic Christian brings down the whole church. A so-called stone fortress with plastic sides will not withstand attacks very well.

I decided I would break the shell before things got out of hand. Doing that was not easy. You definitely have to step out of your comfort zone to do it, but hey, that’s what life is about.

One thing I need to work on is that I am a “procrastinating workaholic.” (It sounds like an oxymoron, I know, but it’s true.) I always want to do more, but I never seem to have enough time to do anything “right now.”

Even simply admitting a problem is a step toward breaking the mold and solving it. Working with others to help solve problems is very helpful; their encouraging and support lead me to stay on track.

Now I feel like I am displaying a new nature in Christ. I’m not just singing the songs and talking the talk, but it feels authentic. I am no longer plastic. I am real. **SR**



Reflections

by Leanne Lippincott-Wuerthele

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

“Don’t hoard treasure down here where it gets eaten by moths and corroded by rust or—worse!—stolen by burglars. Stockpile treasure in heaven...” (Matthew 6:19-20, The Message).

I’m a “pack rat” extraordinaire. As far back as I can remember, I’ve been a “saver.” It probably began after keeping something for a long time, finally throwing it away, and then needing it the very next day.

I never thought this behavior was much of a problem until my kids started rummaging through my bedroom closet, searching for dress-up costumes. Back then, I had such “treasures” as Nehru jackets, bell-bottom pants, and a full-length black and silver dress that unzipped in front to reveal matching hot pants.

While my lifelong propensity to save outdated or useless items occasionally came in handy, it ultimately spawned three unwanted by-products: embarrassment, frustration, and stress.

It’s maddening when you constantly have to explain your household clutter to guests: “Oh, you know, people have a lot of things to sort through when they remarry and combine two households.” (Fred and I have been married over two years now.)

Frustration and the resulting stress are the worst side effects.

Time to de-clutter da clutter

“Now, where did I put that insurance policy?” “Hmm, I found the blender, but where’s the lid?” “Fred, do you know where I put Jacey?” [our youngest grandchild].

I keep gnashing my teeth.

I once bought a book on *How to Unclutter Your Life*, but I can’t find it in all my clutter.

A few months ago, I discovered several dead corsages in an old shoebox. My first thought was, *Ah... the precious memories*. Suddenly, reality slapped me in the face. *When did I wear those flowers? What were the occasions?* I couldn’t remember. That’s when the rose-colored glasses came off.

Those dry, sand-colored crumbling corsages weren’t priceless treasures; they were useless junk. No “warm fuzzies” filled the air. I tossed the shoebox and its contents.

The next day I had another victory. I ran across the high heels I had worn at my 1970 wedding. Originally white as snow, they were now beige. They had also curled up worse than the shoes on one of Santa’s elves. They joined the dead corsages in the trash.

Last month, I held the Mother of All Rummage Sales, letting go of such items as:

- One large kitty litter box. (We don’t have a cat.)

- A scuba diving mask and rubber fins. (The only place Fred and I “swim” is in our hot tub.)

- Five dust pans and three hammers. (Whenever I couldn’t find something, I simply replaced it.)



- The housecoat I wore when I gave birth to my son in 1975. (It still fits, but I don’t want to wear something that’s older than my 33-year-old.)

Hopefully, I’m becoming more of a “giver” and less of a “saver.”

I keep reminding myself that the things I don’t need can be put to good use by those who have much less than I do. It’s selfish to hang on to “dust-gatherers” that less fortunate people can turn into true treasures.

Like many other Christians, I fight a constant battle between what I want and what I really need. It’s not that God doesn’t want His children to enjoy nice things here on earth; He just doesn’t want us to put the material ahead of the spiritual.

I pray that as I continue to de-clutter my house and life, I’ll live up to that expectation. **SR**

pray



PRAY— 1 Thess. 5:17
SDB General Conference
July 26–August 1, 2009

Lancaster (Pa.) Bible College



The President's Page
by Ed Cruzan

Pray to bring Glory to God

In studying prayer over the years, God has led me down some interesting paths. Many paths have led to a clearer understanding of who God is.

While teaching a Sabbath School class a number of years ago, the Lord revealed this to me: I need to *know* what the Scriptures say and I need to *do* what the Scriptures tell me to do.

As I more clearly understood the application process of the Bible, I began to apply it to prayer. Instead of studying and just talking more about prayer, the Holy Spirit convicted me that I needed to actually “pray” more. Understanding and application need to go hand in hand.

So the question is, “Why do we pray?” My short answer is “because Jesus did and he told us to.”

The memory verse for October was the first verse of John 17: “After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed, ‘Father, the time has come; glorify Your Son, that Your Son may glorify You.’”

From this verse we can gather some understanding of the purpose of prayer. Jesus prayed from an established relationship with his Father. When we look at the life of



To become intimate with God, we must shift from focusing on our needs to focusing on God and His purposes.

Jesus, we see that he maintained that intimate relationship. Jesus was *always* about his Father’s business.

Jesus is our ultimate example of a life-relationship with the Father. Using his example for our lives, we see that in order to pray from God’s perspective, we must establish and maintain a personal, inti-

mate relationship with the Father.

This doesn’t mean that we need to understand God completely before we begin to pray. (That’s not going to happen this side of heaven.) What it does mean is that we are to give to God what is due Him. We pray to bring glory to God!

As my brothers and sisters around the Conference, I am asking you to become *God-centered* in prayer. To become intimate with God, we must shift from focusing on *our* needs to focusing on God and *His* purposes. As Pastor Andy Samuels’ Conference theme said, we must hunger after a limitless God.

Between now and the next *Sabbath Recorder* issue, please join with your pastor in praying to bring glory to God. Pastors, if your fellowship does not gather together regularly for an extended time of corporate prayer, please begin taking steps to make it happen.

John 17:22 says that Jesus gave *us* the same glory that the Father gave to him. It is with that glory that we may glorify the Father, true to the example of Jesus.

Pray together regularly. Pray to bring glory to God. **SR**



by Executive Director
Rob Appel

The State of the Conference (Part 3 of 3)

Last month we read about a 3-year Ministry Alliance Plan that I called a “Blueprint M.A.P. for SDB Growth and Services.” We also heard about some of our churches and their exciting ministry work.

This is the final part of my Conference speech.

God wants us to be a beacon in the world and to do it now! Scripture instructs us to always be ready to “give an account” for the hope that is within us.

1 Peter 3:15 says, *“But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.”*

This must be our motivation and the cause to which we have dedicated our lives in doing God’s work.

As our history acknowledges, each generation faces the responsibility of speaking to the issues of the day, and facing the challenges of its own climate. What the climate is today is not the climate of tomorrow.

Oliver Wendell Holmes said, “What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.”

So, what lies within us?

One of my biggest concerns, as I have traveled and witnessed ev-

ents firsthand, is the lack of young people we have in our churches. I know that many of us are concerned that our center of attention is primarily focused on the adults of this Conference.

If we are to stay a vital part of Christ’s work here on earth, we need to establish programs and enthusiasm among our youth. If we don’t do this they will continue to go somewhere else; where the “grass appears to be much greener.”

A solution is to get our young people involved in their local churches and the work of the Conference at an earlier age than we have traditionally followed. Their insight and focus will benefit our Conference through their vision, enthusiasm and involvement.

Or, are we willing to see another generation leave our churches?

Recommendation

Therefore, I recommend that we elect through our normal nominating processes those who are between the ages of 21-40, to get them more involved in the work of the Conference and its Boards and Agencies. And to start this year!

In the early ’90s, a ministry called Mission of Revival and Evangelism (MORE 2000) helped to lead churches in discovering what their

purpose was, and set into motion ministry achievements that the local church didn’t know they were capable of. They did it as a unified body of believers and focused on a purpose for their church and community.

Well, the year 2000 has come and gone, and it looked like the MORE 2000 program did, too. Two of the books that were instrumental in the process were out of print and not to be found. But God is good and we have been able to purchase 45 copies of each text.

We are making the MORE 2000 program available again and renaming it “**SDB C.P.R.**” This stands for “Commitment,” “Purpose,” and “Revival.” The books are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. If your church would like to know more about this, talk to Kevin Butler, Gordon Lawton, or myself—soon!

We can’t change the past. We can’t control the future. But with God’s help and direction, we can do things today that will affect tomorrow. Changes we make in our lives and our churches today will have meaning and purpose in the generations to come.

Do you want to be a difference maker? I suggest that you seriously consider the ministry of revival and evangelism and take the **SDB C.P.R.** training in your church. It might just save some lives! **SR**



Plans for the diligent

by Morgan Shepard

“The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty” (Proverbs 21:5, NIV).

Earlier this year we let you know of changes being made to 403(b) retirement plans that will go into effect January 1, 2009. If your church and/or pastor currently makes contributions to a 403(b) account, then a written plan must be in place by the first of the year.

If a plan is not in place, then you will not be able to make contributions to the existing accounts after January 1, 2009, and until a written plan is in place.

The cost for preparing a plan can run from \$1,000 to \$2,000, and then there are the recurring administrative fees. In anticipation of these changes, the Committee on Support and Retirement (COSAR) has established an “SDB Pastor’s Retirement Plan” (or, The Plan) that provides an option for SDB churches, agencies and societies to use in meeting these new requirements.

COSAR will be the plan administrator. They will have all the reporting responsibilities through a Third Party Administrator (TPA) hired by them.

Those eligible for The Plan include pastors, qualified church employees, qualified SDB General Conference employees, and qualified SDB agency and society employees.


Here are the basics of The Plan:

- It is a 403(b) Plan, or Tax Sheltered Annuity (TSA)
- The employer (church, agency, society) will need to adopt The Plan in order to participate
- Contributions can be made one of two ways:
 - Regular 403(b) contributions are *pre-tax*, where you will pay taxes on distributions when you retire;

—Roth 403(b) contributions are *after-tax*, where you will pay taxes on your contributions, but distributions will be tax-free (certain conditions apply)

- All contributions are 100% vested, but the value is subject to market gains and losses
- Distributions begin at age 65 (earlier/later in some cases)
- Rollovers from other 403(b) and certain IRAs will be permitted
- You can direct where your funds will be invested within the parameters of The Plan. The performance of your account will depend on where you choose to invest your funds and are not affected by other accounts.
- You can withdraw funds in the event of a financial hardship (conditions apply). Be aware that withdrawing funds will affect performance and what will be available for retirement.
- The Plan expenses are either allocated proportionally across all accounts, or are applied against specific accounts due to certain actions (some expenses may be paid for by COSAR).

COSAR will send out more detailed information to churches, pastors, and SDB Conference agencies and societies. Utilizing this plan is completely voluntary and is being provided by COSAR to assist those organizations that cannot afford to write and administer a plan of their own.

We should not put our hope in “retirement plans,” but in our “Ultimate Retirement.” 

“There is surely a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off.” “...In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven” (Proverbs 23:18; Matthew 26:64 NIV).



Ask Sophie

Hi! My name is Sophie. I was born on an Amish farm just a few miles from the Lancaster Bible College in Pennsylvania where Conference is going to be in July 2009. I'm here to answer some of your questions and chat about the area! I'll be your best friend when it comes to advice. So e-mail me your questions at AskSophieNow@aol.com.

What About Beds?

All my friends are already asking me about where they can sleep. They all want to know they have a nice soft bed for a good night's rest (and maybe an afternoon nap). Well, Lancaster is one **BUSY** place, especially in the summer!

So first I need to talk to those of you who plan to stay in off-campus housing or at a campground: You all better be sure you have your spot reserved early. There are lots of places to choose from in all price ranges... but you can't just sit around... you need to reserve soon! One place to get information about hotels or campgrounds is at padutchcountry.com.

But I do have some good news about beds! There is a block of rooms saved for Conference-goers at the Days Inn & Suites (formerly Travelodge Inn &

Suites), 1492 Lititz Pike, Lancaster, PA 17601. Here's what you do: Call for your individual reservations at (717) 293-8400. Give the **GROUP NAME: Seventh Day Baptist General Conference** and reserve your room with a credit card (I use "MY MASTERS CARD" and get reward points toward squeaky toys and doggie treats, but you will have to fetch your own card!). The rate for July 26-30: \$71.00/night; for July 31-August 1: \$81.00/night. The cut-off date for reservations at this special rate is June 26. A block of 50 rooms is reserved and it is **FIRST COME FIRST SERVED**.

I'll tell you about staying on the campus of Lancaster Bible College in an upcoming issue, but for now, feel free to start hounding me with questions.

Denominational Dateline

November 2008

- | | | | |
|-------|---|-------|---|
| 1-2 | Tract and Communication Council Annual Meeting, SDB Center, Janesville—Kevin Butler | 10 | In-Service Training School graduation, Plainfield, N.J.—Butler |
| 1-2 | Nicaragua churches—Kirk Looper | 24-25 | Memorial Fund Trustees quarterly meeting, Riverside, Calif.—Morgan Shepard |
| 7-9 | South Atlantic Association, South East Atlanta, Ga.—Rob Appel, Gordon Lawton, Ed Cruzan, Looper, Ron Elston | 24-25 | Missionary Society Board of Managers meeting, Ashaway, R.I.—Looper |
| 12-20 | Beirut, Lebanon—Looper, Elston | 25 | Board of Christian Education Executive Committee, Alfred Station, N.Y.—Andrew Camenga |
| 15 | C.P.R. kickoff, Lincoln, Neb.—Butler, Appel, Lawton | 31 | Sabbath School Teacher Training, Shiloh, N.J.—Camenga |
| 18 | Evangel University, Springfield, Mo.—Appel | 31-1 | Council on Ministry annual meeting, SDB Center, Janesville—Lawton |

December

No visits planned at this time

January 2009

- 5-6 North American Baptist Fellowship gathering, North Carolina—Appel

February

- 19-20 Coordinating Leadership Team meetings, Daytona Beach, Fla., SDB Church
21-23 General Council meetings, Daytona Beach

More than one way to Memorize

The Board of Christian Education's Scripture Memorization Program for 2008-2009 has two ways to complete the requirements.

You may do it the way you've always done: memorize the nine monthly verses that highlight the General Conference president's theme. OR, you may exercise your brain to a greater degree, and memorize a whole Bible chapter chosen to work with the overall program.

For 2008-2009, you may memorize **1 Thessalonians 1**. If you choose to do this, recite the whole chapter, at one time, in front of someone designated by your church (pastor, Sabbath School teacher, CE chair, etc.).

With either option, you will complete the requirements for the Scripture Memorization Program. Your church will submit one list of participants, a certificate will be made with your name, and your name will appear in the *Sabbath Recorder*.
—Andrew Camenga

On the topic of "Torture"

The SDB Peace Fellowship's website now has a section "About Torture" to help with our local discussions this year.

Go to www.forministry.com/USNJSDBGCSFPSP/AboutTorture/.

At that tab several pages appear, giving the initial proposed statement against torture, the action taken at General Conference, and some resources.

At the SDB website (seventhdaybaptist.org), see the SDBlog entry on September 22 for a reference to another web article about the topic.

2008 SDB General Conference Operating Budget

Board / Agency	Monthly Operating Budget	Monthly Giving Towards Budget	Received Sept '08	Over / (Short)
Conference Services*	\$ 22,635.13	\$ 16,513.25	\$ 22,128.67	\$ 5,615.42
Council On Ministry	13,017.33	5,410.25	3,695.67	(1,714.58)
Missionary Soc.	25,083.33	4,879.83	2,520.06	(2,359.77)
Tract Council	12,142.17	4,750.00	3,364.23	(1,385.77)
Christian Edu.	9,676.67	4,470.33	3,220.51	(1,249.82)
Women's Soc.	3,116.67	2,475.00	133.33	(2,341.67)
Total	\$ 85,671.30	\$ 38,498.67	\$ 35,062.47	\$ (3,436.20)

* Includes: Conference Services, Building Operations Fund, Christian Social Action, and Ecumenical Affairs

Other Sources of Income for monthly operating budgets include: income from investments, sales and withdrawals from savings.

Budget Overage / Shortfall Year to Date	\$(25,308.32)	93% Of Budget
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Morgan Shepard
Treasurer, SDB General Conference

Marriages

Cruickshank - Albenzi.—Omar N. Cruickshank and Angelina Albenzi were united in marriage on May 24, 2008, at the Reformation Lutheran Church in Philadelphia, PA (while the Hope SDB Church is under renovation). The groom's father, Rev. Kenroy N. Cruickshank officiated, assisted by Rev. Val Bennett.

Hipskind - Butler.—Gregory P. Hipskind and Jennifer Lee Butler were united in marriage on June 21, 2008 at Elim Covenant Church in Moline, IL. Pastors Kevin Butler (the bride's father) and Gene Smith (the bride's grandfather) officiated.

Fury - Crouch.—Jason Fury and Sarah Crouch were united in marriage on September 13, 2008, at the Mission Oaks Community Center, Carmichael, CA. Pastors Dan Axtell and Steven Crouch (the bride's father) officiated.

Miller - Penley.—Dennis Miller and Sodette Penley were united in marriage on September 13, 2008, at the American Legion Hall in Hamilton, NJ. The Rev. Kenroy N. Cruickshank officiated.

The family missed it last year, so...

*61st Wedding Anniversary
Card Shower* for
Ira (Shorty) & Collett Soper



Their **61st** is on November 19. Kim says, "Please send a card!"

The Sopers
Rt 1 Box 75
North Loup NE 68859

Obituaries

Severance.—Mildred Louise (Kerr) Severance, 94, died peacefully at Cerenity Senior Care in White Bear Lake, Minn., on August 26, 2008.

Milly was born December 15, 1913, in Fouke, Ark., to Woodard Whitfield “Whit” and Tacy (Eadlesfield) Kerr. Tacy moved often to follow her sister, Grace. When Grace moved away from Milton, Wis., Tacy stayed there to raise her family.

Milly graduated from Milton Union High School in 1933. She met Howard Severance there and they married at her mother’s house on September 20, 1936.

Moving several times due to Howard’s insurance job, the Severances finally settled in White Bear Lake in 1962 where she spent the rest of her life, always knowing that Milton was “home.”

She is survived by her son Phil of St. Paul, Minn.; one sister, Gert Airis of Janesville, Wis.; grandchildren Val Wiebusch and Cole Severance; three great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews. Milly was preceded in death by her husband, Howard; brothers John and Woodard; and a granddaughter, Amanda.

Funeral services were held on September 5, 2008, at the Seventh Day Baptist Church in Milton, with Pastor George Calhoun officiating. Burial was at Milton Lawns Cemetery in Janesville, Wis.

Randolph.—Gladys Marilyn Randolph, 96, of Denver, Colo., passed away on September 1, 2008, at a care center in Thornton, Colo., after two years of at-home health care.

She was born in Andover, N.Y., on November 13, 1911, the daughter of Rev. Erlo and Elsie Blanche (FitzRandolph) Sutton. Following

several SDB pastorates in New York and New Jersey, the family moved to Milton Junction, Wis., in 1923.

On September 7, 1933, Gladys married Robert William FitzRandolph, son of Rev. John and Florence (Van Voorhees) FitzRandolph in Milton Junction. John had become pastor of the Milton Junction SDB Church in 1926 when Erlo became Director of Christian Education for the denomination and also editor of *The Helping Hand*. Robert and Gladys were sweethearts throughout high school and college. Sometime after their marriage, they dropped the “Fitz” from FitzRandolph, although it appears on their children’s birth certificates.

Gladys was a member of the American Guild of Organists for over 60 years, and played organ for churches in Wisconsin, Illinois, and Colorado for over 50 years. She also taught pipe organ students at Milton College for two decades.

Married for 72 years, Robert passed away on February 23, 2006. Robert and Gladys are entombed in the Crown Hill Tower of Memories mausoleum in Wheat Ridge, Colo. They are survived by one daughter, Roberta Ann Hansen of Greenville, Texas, and one son, Lynn Arden FitzRandolph of Phoenix, Ariz.; four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

A funeral service was held in the mausoleum on September 5, 2008, and a memorial service was held at the Thornton, Colo., SDB Church on September 25, 2008. Gladys’ pastor, Rev. Rodney Henry, officiated at both services.

Van Noty.—Wilna Mae Van Noty, 90, passed away in Hemet, Calif., on September 6, 2008, following an extended illness with several complications including Alzheimer’s.

Wilna was born in Battle Creek, Mich., on March 18, 1918, daughter of Paul and Nettie Crandall. She was baptized at an early age by Pastor J.W. Crofoot, and was an excellent Bible student all her life. Wilna graduated from Battle Creek High School in 1936. She worked for a short while at the Battle Creek Sanitarium and the Battle Creek Food Company.

On Valentine’s Day, 1942, Wilna married Merrill R. Van Noty, and she became a loving and sacrificing mother and wife at home. Following two of Merrill’s stints in the military, the family moved to Riverside, Calif., in 1953. She joined the Riverside SDB Church in 1954. Subsequent moves took the family to homes in Washington State; Durango, Colo.; North Loup, Neb.; and Flagstaff, Ariz.

Wilna is survived by her husband, Merrill; four daughters and one son; one sister and three brothers; eleven grandchildren; eleven great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandson.

Burial was in the North Loup Village Cemetery beside many of her ancestral family.

Dear Readers,

Thank you for keeping us informed of your family news. You may e-mail updates to:

*editor@
seventhdaybaptist.org*

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

—Editor

Do you read *The Sabbath Recorder*?

Do you study *The Helping Hand*?

Do you have a pastor?

Do you send a donation 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!

Seventh Day Baptist Center
PO Box 1678
Janesville WI 53547-1678
www.seventhdaybaptist.org

KEVIN'S

ORNER

Beyond the printed page

I want to thank you for having the *Recorder* come into your home, and for taking the time to read this latest issue. Our monthly get-together is a special connection among Seventh Day Baptists, one that has been happening since 1844.

Our communication efforts have come a long way since the mid-19th century.

Did you know that there are many more valuable resource tools available to you at our website? Various articles found on the main site—www.seventhdaybaptist.org—provide readers from all around the planet

a wealth of information about our history and beliefs. Snapshot descriptions of our various boards and agencies can also link to separate websites hosted by those SDB ministries.

What else is at our main website?

- A colorful map, broken down by regions in the U.S. and southern Canada, allows the web surfer to search that particular area for SDB churches.
- Pictures from our annual Conference, along with copies of the “Conference Crier” newsletter. And this year, delegates and guests were able to register (and pay) for Conference on-line.
- Can’t find a recent issue of the *Recorder* but want to re-read an article? At the *Sabbath Recorder* section, you can access an electronic file of our magazine back to mid-2005.
- Care to send an e-greeting card that comes from a Seventh Day Baptist source? You can do that from our site.
- Need to stock up on publications for outreach or materials for Sabbath School? Our “E-Store” can help you do that.
- Are you wanting to know more about serving the Lord in Summer Christian Service Corps? Forms are at the website.

- Tired of writing out your regular checks to the Conference? The E-Gifting feature can set up an electronic funds transfer to help you in your tithing and gift giving.

One part of the site that sees the most change is the SDB Exec Blog, listed as “SDBlog” along the left-hand menu. The SDBlog contains news, announcements and reflections by your Conference workers.

We have blogged items about upcoming events, SDB references in other publications, new resources or products, calls for prayer or relief help, IRS and tax guidelines, reports from SDB meetings, and much more. Some are humorous, some quite serious.

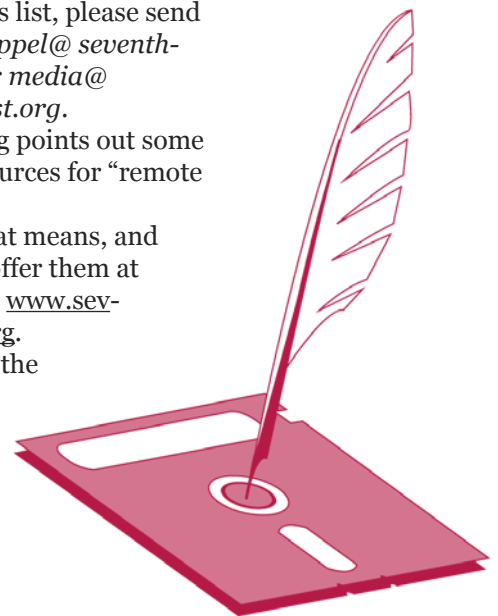
A number of people receive e-mails when the new blog entries appear. This includes members of the Tract Council, General Council, and people contributing at the “Editor’s Circle” level for the *SR*.

Rob Appel’s “Grapevine” e-letter is now going to be done as a blog. We are in the process of adding his “Grapevine” mailing list to our blog notification listing. If you would like to be added to this list, please send an e-mail to robappel@seventh-daybaptist.org or media@seventhdaybaptist.org.

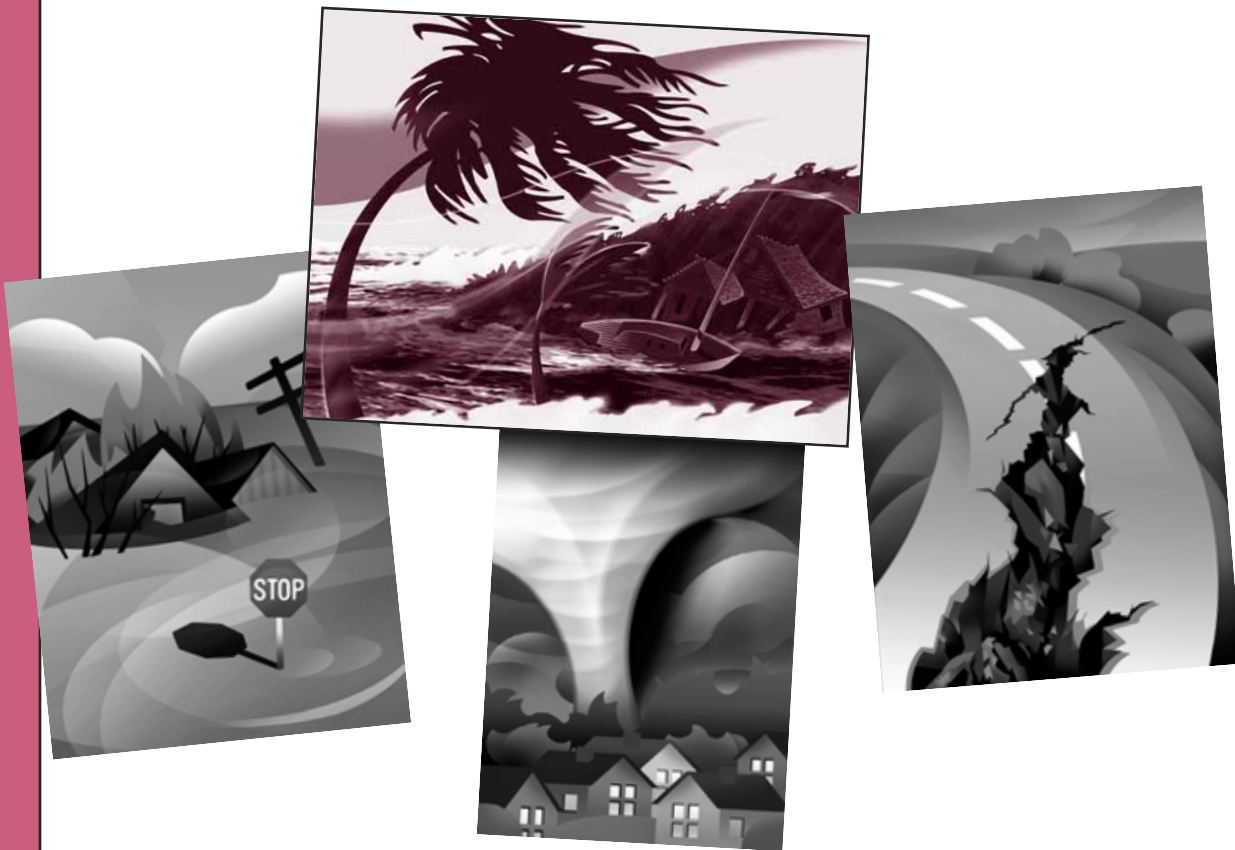
One recent blog points out some new worship resources for “remote Sabbathkeepers.”

To see what that means, and what we have to offer them at our website, go to www.seventhdaybaptist.org.

I wonder what the early *SR* editors would think if they could get on-line?



Time for Relief.



Your gift to the
SDB United Relief Fund
provides help for medical and emergency needs
both here and abroad.

Please give generously to the **SDB
United Relief Fund** through your
local church on Thanksgiving Sabbath
or mail your gift directly to:

SDB United Relief Fund
3120 Kennedy Road
PO Box 1678
Janesville WI 53547-1678