



The
Sabbath
RECORDER

December 2008

News for and about Seventh Day Baptists



*Why Jesus came
as a **BABY***



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

- **Just graduate** and looking for a college?
- **Just starting** a new family and looking for a place to settle down?
- **Just looking** for new opportunities?

Just LOOK at LINCOLN, Nebraska!

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And ministry opportunities? We've got 'em at Living Word SDB Fellowship.

For information, contact Pastor Steve:

www.LivingWordSDB.org

LivingWord 
SDB Fellowship

A Banner Year!

I love banners, so I'm asking your church to make one for Conference 2009.

Create your banner around the Conference theme of "**Pray**," or one of the Scripture Memory verses. Please begin praying as you put together your creative team.

Have fun and make plans to display your banner at General Conference next year in Lancaster, Pennsylvania!

*To God be the Glory,
Ed Cruzan, President 2009*

A good size for banners is 60 inches high and 36 inches wide, with a rod and cord to hang it. I can't wait to see them!



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 seventhdaybaptist.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.



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Bethlehem, the manger, and you

by Perry Cain

Most of us from the “baby boomer” generation on up probably remember a Christmas season tradition that included watching the Charles Schulz classic, “A Charlie Brown Christmas.”

The story of the cartoon touches on the over-commercialization of Christmas, and points to the true meaning—the birth of Jesus Christ—continuing a theme explored by satirists such as Stan Freberg and Tom Lehrer during the 1950s.

Bringing the *Peanuts* characters to television was no easy task. The strip’s creators, with funding from sponsor Coca-Cola, presented the CBS network with an idea for a special starring Schulz’s characters.

What most of us don’t know about the airing of this Christmas classic is that network executives were not at all keen on several aspects of the show. This forced Schulz and Bill Melendez, the originators of the story, to wage some serious battles to preserve their vision.

The executives did not want to have Linus reciting the story of the birth of Christ from the Gospel of Luke (Luke 2:8-14). The network orthodoxy of the time assumed that viewers would not want to sit through passages of the King James Bible.

A story reported on one version of the making of the program revealed that Charles Schulz was adamant about keeping this scene in, remark-

ing that “If we don’t tell the true meaning of Christmas, who will?” Point well taken.

Once again the season is upon us and the story needs to be told again. The same question remains that Schulz and the *Peanuts* characters grappled with in 1965: “What does it really mean?”

The answer can be found in Luke’s account of the birth of Christ when he points to Bethlehem and the manger.

“In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to his own town to register.

“So Joseph also went up

from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her first-born, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”
(Luke 2:1-7)

In the scheme of God’s great plan of salvation, the story takes us to Bethlehem. Why there, of all places? Why not somewhere grand and glorious for the King of kings and Lord of lords?

That Jesus would be born in Bethlehem was ordained by God long before Caesar Augustus made his decree: “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from old, from ancient times” (Micah 5:2).

The Good News is inclusive

It is my conviction that God intentionally chose Bethlehem as the portal for the Son of God to enter the world. Why? In order that His



© United Features, 1965

CBS executives did not want to have Linus reciting the story of the birth of Christ. The network orthodoxy of the time assumed that viewers would not want to sit through passages of the King James Bible.

Bethlehem is a symbol of God's inclusiveness because it is a small place where "everyone" was to go; to their hometown.



plan of salvation would be all-inclusive.

When Luke opens the narrative with “in those days,” he wants us to understand that all that is to follow is a result of God’s sovereign rule. Even the Roman authorities are under His Authority when Caesar Augustus made the decree that a census should be taken.

Throughout Scripture we see that God obviously moves the pieces of the puzzle into position in order that His purposes may be fulfilled. This birth narrative is no exception. God uses Roman authorities and customs to help fulfill the prophecy concerning the Messianic promise from centuries before.

One significant feature of God’s salvation plan throughout the Old Testament is that the plan would be inclusive. Although Israel was referred to as “the chosen people,” it is clear from Genesis to Malachi that the Lord’s intention was to bless “all peoples on earth.” This is seen in the original call to Abraham: “I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you” (Genesis 12:3).

The prophet Isaiah (36:25) also makes this clear when he includes even the wicked in God’s salvation plan by saying, “Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.”

Bethlehem is a symbol of God’s inclusiveness because it is a small place where “everyone” was to go; to their hometown. All of us have a hometown—a place where it all began for us, a place where we may return from time to time to stay connected to our roots.

My hometown is Salem, West Virginia. Although I do not live there anymore, every now and then I take a drive through Salem just to reconnect, to remember, to return to the place of my youth. In doing so, I am usually inspired, breathed into, life rekindled.

In a sense, every time we return to Bethlehem in the retelling of this familiar story, we experience the same things.

We all have a connection with this small “hometown” called Bethlehem. It’s a place we can call home. It’s a place where we are included. After all, “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son...”

The Good News is simple

So, God’s salvation plan is inclusive. As if that isn’t good news enough, it’s also not so complicated that we can’t “get it.”

Luke goes on (2:6-7) that “while they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”

Let’s not lose sight of the irony of the most important event in history taking place in a manger! R.H. Stein, in *The New American Commentary* on Luke, says that it reveals how God elevates the lowly and humble, and rejects the proud and mighty of this world.

The sheer simplicity of this part of the story has always intrigued me. I am the proud father of two grown daughters, but I am not so removed from their births that I don’t remember the simplicity of it all.

In some ways, the story of the birth of our Lord makes more sense than the births of my daughters. My girls were both born in modern hospitals, with all the available technologies of the time—the doctors, the nurses, the support staff, the gadgets, the comforts, etc. They both arrived “in simplicity amongst the complexities.”

With our Lord, however, “the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger.” There is a noticeable absence of complexity, only a powerful silence in the simplicity.

Our faith, in essence, needs to remain “simple” in order for us to fully experience and express it. So goes the old Shaker hymn of the 18th century:

*'Tis the gift to be simple,
'tis the gift to be free,
'Tis the gift to come down
where you ought to be,
And when we find ourselves in
the place just right,
'Twill be in the valley of love
and delight.
When true simplicity is gain'd,
To bow and to bend we shan't
be asham'd,
to turn, turn, will be our delight
till by turning, turning we come
round right.*

The Good News is accessible

The news gets even better. Not only is the Good News inclusive and simple, it is also accessible.

This is evidenced in the announcement of the Lord's birth to, of all people, shepherds. They are told about the birth and where they can go to find the newborn King:

“When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.’”



**“She wrapped him
in cloths and placed
him in a manger.”
A noticeable absence
of complexity—
a powerful silence
in the simplicity.**

“So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them” (Luke 2:16-17).

One should not romanticize the occupation of shepherds. In general, the shepherds were dishonest (*Sanh. 25b*) and unclean according to the standards of the Law. According to R.H. Stein, they represent the outcasts and sinners for whom Jesus came. Such outcasts were the first recipients of the good news.

But think about it. They were the first ones to hear the Good News. The Gospel had become accessible to even them.

I love the words of Luke and how he describes their response. First, they “said to one another...” They discussed what they had heard among themselves. Then, “they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby.” They responded to what they had heard.

Luke does not indicate in any way that their directions were off or that they took any wrong turns. They simply went where they had been instructed to go and they did not delay in doing it.

So often, our access to God is hindered by our talking ourselves out of what God has clearly made known to us, and then we delay in our response and miss out on what could have been.

In my counseling and ministry, I often tell people that I have no “corner on the market” to hearing from God. If we have a personal relationship with God through Christ, then we have access to the “still small voice” of God.

Most of the time the reality of His salvation is as close as our “Bethlehem”—the place we return to. It is also about keeping it simple enough for us to get it. Develop a deeper appreciation for the simple things of life, especially at this time of the year.

And finally, know that God is always waiting to pour out His heart for us, even more than our hearts sometimes yearn for Him.

“We shall surely find Him when we seek Him with all our hearts.” Then, as you discover Him anew, go tell somebody about it. **SR**

Rev. Perry Cain is pastor of the Lost Creek, W.Va., SDB Church.

So was He

by Emily Graffius

There we were, discharged from a Denver hospital with our two-day-old baby son. A huge winter blizzard was blowing outside and the hospital morphed into emergency relief mode.

Home was only 20 minutes down the road, and boy, did we want to get home! Oh, and by the way, if the hospital allowed us to leave, it must have been okay, right? Um, well... not so much!

Thirty minutes later, we're still sitting in the parking lot with tons of other cars all trying to leave. We creep along and the half-hour turns to several hours. The sun has set,

snow is falling, bumper-to-bumper highway, sleeping child (THANK the LORD!), mom healing from a C-section, and a silently freaking out dad.

A police car shuts down the road we needed to take to get home and directs everyone to a community center to sleep. Right! Let's share space with people who have colds and the flu and who-knows-what with a newborn and me just having major surgery.

We must get off the road! *Now* we know it is dangerously urgent. The city of Denver is shutting down.

We call 9-1-1 but they won't come

since our car is working and I guess we're not really in "danger." Some County officer tries to come but we've moved and now we're "out of his district." Seriously?!

We are desperate. We decide to just pick some random house that looks nice and welcoming. I choose the one with all the Christmas lights, and watch as my gallant husband trucks through the snow as it goes up to his knees.

Steven gets to the door and the man is as cold and harsh as the blizzard. Their house is "too small. Try the hotel five miles down the road!"

Was he *kidding*? We weren't sure if we could make it *even one mile* down this road.

We're devastated. No room in the inn, eh? I think back to what Mary and Joseph must have felt; the rejection, the urgency...

In some ways I can actually have empathy for Mary and Joseph's desperate search for a place to have their baby.

We already had our son, but didn't want to die in an ice storm afterwards. What emotions and feelings they must have had, not only to birth the Son of God but to make sure they were somewhere safe to do just that.

"For surely it is not angels [Jesus] helps, but Abraham's descendants. For this reason [Jesus] had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted" (Hebrews 2:16-18).

cont. next page



Jesus, our Savior and King, grew up on this earth. So did you.

He was an infant crying in the middle of the night. So were you.

He was a toddler learning his boundaries with his parents and constantly on the move. So were you.

He was a child playing outside with the other children. So were you.

He lived a life from infancy in order to walk in our shoes. Not only does he know what it's like, but he actually understands our temptations because he was right there, too. He was tempted to lust, tempted to lie, tempted to hate, and tempted to cheat. Although he remained perfect without sin, he still understands the temptation and suffered.

Our Savior is not one that is far removed. He is a Savior who can truly empathize with our experiences, our pain, and our joys. Jesus came as a baby for these reasons and more.

The in-the-flesh incarnation of Jesus is vital to grasp. He did this because of *LOVE*. He had to come as a baby in order to live, in order to die and be raised again, in order for us to be saved.

He was fully God and fully man. He came as a helpless baby with hay and animals all around. What a humble beginning to symbolize his humble life.

Jesus isn't always what we expect. Many people expected a grownup king to come in triumph and glory. Instead, he came as a tiny newborn, helpless and needy.

What a creative and absolutely breathtaking plan of God. We have a relationship with Jesus as a man but it's important to remember that he was born just as we were. He was alive for over three decades before he died and rose again.

"Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did" (1 John 2:6). Don't just think of baby Jesus and

smile. Thank him for showing his love, for living and growing as we did from birth.

Let us take action to actually follow in his footsteps. Let's walk as Jesus did.

We notice and worship "Jesus the infant," but this year, make an effort to notice and worship his whole life as well. Focus on his teachings and change. As we look in the mirror, let us not walk away forgetting what we've seen.

Jesus cried as a baby like you, and he had temptations like you, too—and prevailed. Let's seek his strength, his grace, his passion, his love, and make it apply to our lives with purpose to affect others' lives.

After Steven and I were rejected by the "Christmas lights man" and discovered all hotels were booked, Katie and Levi Moore from our home church in Denver took us so kindly and quickly into their home. Who

knew we had backtracked so much to be near their home? God does take care of us.

When we're feeling desperate and alone in this cold world, take comfort in knowing Jesus has been there, too. He invites us into his home, a warm place to lay our heads. "Come to me all who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

Jesus does not turn us away.

You are in a very desperate and lonely situation. So was he. You are dirty, bleeding and feeling persecuted. So was he.

Let's worship our Jesus who came as a baby for our sake, in order to walk where we would walk.

And even if the world says there's "no room" for us, Jesus stands with open arms today saying, "I know. I've been there." Hallelujah! **SR**

Emily Graffius is a member of the Living Word SDB Fellowship in Lincoln, Neb.

When we're feeling desperate and alone in this cold world, Jesus does not turn us away.



Why a baby?

by Herbert Saunders



We are drawn to a stable, cattle stall, and manger of hay to witness the incarnation of God into our human drama.

The glorious season celebrating the Nativity has come again. And we are drawn to a stable, cattle stall, and manger of hay to witness the incarnation of God into our human drama.

J.I. Packer wrote, “God became man; the divine Son became a Jew; the Almighty appeared on earth as a helpless human baby, unable to do more than lie and stare and wriggle and make noises, needing to be fed and changed and taught to talk like any other child. And there was no illusion or deception in this: the babyhood of the Son of God was a reality. The more you think about it, the more staggering it gets. Nothing in fiction is so fantastic as is this truth of the Incarnation.”

But why a baby? Why did Emmanuel—“God with us”—enter our world in the form of a child growing in the womb of a virgin peasant girl, in an obscure land away from the centers of culture and sophistication: Rome, Greece, Egypt, and the Fertile Crescent?

Why did Emmanuel choose a carpenter for his adoptive father? Michael Card, in “Joseph’s Song,” cries: “Lord, I know he’s not my own, not of my flesh, not of my bone. But Father, let this baby be the son of my love.”

God’s Plan

Why a baby? First of all, this was God’s plan, not ours.

Had *we* been in charge, things would certainly have been different! God would have entered the world with a trumpet fanfare, fully grown,

and ready to take charge of His sinful world once and for all.

We would have seen mankind zapped into submission, believing and behaving as God intended when He first thought of us. Sin would have been eradicated with the snap of a divine finger and all would be well at last.

But we are not God!

But thank goodness, *we are not God!* Speaking through the prophet, God said, “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD” (Isaiah 55:8). Our solution would have taken away the very image of God created within us by free will.

When sin entered the world, God devised His plan. It would take time, centuries in fact, for the plan to unfold. But God’s timing is impeccable:

“When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman” (Galatians 4:4).

His plan, His solution, was a baby because “God so loved the world,” and the only way He could save the world was to give “his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life” (John 3:16).

Maltbie D. Babcock wrote, “God be thanked for that good and perfect gift, the gift unspeakable: His life, His love, His very self in Christ Jesus.”

God’s Choice

Secondly, it was God’s choice. God chose to enter our human drama as a baby to be like one of us. He chose to accept our human frailty.

He grew up facing the very same situations in life that any baby, tod-

lder, child or teenager faces. Francis Thompson shared:

“Little Jesus, was Thou shy
Once and just so small as I?
And what did it feel like to be
Out of heaven, and just like me?”

Although divine, He chose to become fully human having the capacity to sin. Without that capacity, temptation would have been mute.

He was tempted

He faced Satan in the desert and was tempted to use His divine power to change the course of history, but refused to sin. More than that, as the author of Hebrews wrote, “We have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15).

Every temptation we have ever faced, He faced and resisted.

Saying “No” and “Yes”

Our Lord said “No” to the pleasures of the world and “Yes” to purity. Our Lord said “No” to pride, status and power and “Yes” to humility.

Our Lord said “No” to selfishness and “Yes” to compassion. Our Lord said “No” to the easy way out and “Yes” to obedience.

Paul said, “[Jesus Christ], being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men” (Philippians 2:6-7).

God’s Purpose

Thirdly, God’s purpose was salvation. God’s plan from the beginning was salvation. God’s choice was to bring us salvation.

God’s purpose was realized by becoming one of us as a baby. Phillips Brooks coined the phrase: “Jesus Christ, the condescension of divinity, and the exultation of humanity.”

God wanted us to be saved. But He refused to use His divine power to bring us to submission. By coming to earth as a baby, living our common life, suffering our common ailments, experiencing our propensity to sin, and knowing our human condition firsthand, He gave us an example of how we are to live.

He offered Himself

And He saved us by offering Himself as a human sacrifice for the sins we refused to resist. “And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:8).

John Donne, in one of his sonnets, wrote: “God clothed Himself in vile man’s flesh, so He might be weak enough to suffer woe.”

He knows us, not just as Creator, but *as one of us* for a time.

He understands our needs and our striving. He knows how difficult it is to live this life; to be obedient, to resist temptation, to suffer pain and to experience rejection.

Son of God to Son of Man

Had He come to us in any other way than as a baby we would not be able to relate to His life or example. C.S. Lewis wrote, “The Son of God became the Son of Man so that sons of men may become sons of God.”

According to Athanasius, “He became what we are that He might make us what He is.”

Our plan is to believe. Our choice is to receive. Our purpose is to live.

This is all made possible because “to you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:11).

Why a baby? Because God wanted it, planned it, and chose it. His purpose was our salvation. **SR**

Rev. Herb Saunders pastors the SDB Church in Madison, Wis.

**God
chose to
enter our
human
drama as a
baby to be
like one
of us.
He chose to
accept our
human
frailty.**





The Glory of God

by Nathan Crandall

“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).

Jesus came to earth as a regular baby, and yet not like any other baby ever conceived. In him the glory of the Father came into physical reality.

The Apostle John said that the disciples had seen this glory face to face. The disciples recognized this glory and testified to it.

Yet there were many who did not recognize the glory of the “One and Only.” Many who did not recognize Jesus’ glory opposed his ministry and tried to silence and kill him.

Here we see a central truth of the Gospel. We must recognize who Jesus is in order to be transformed into new creations in Christ. We must recognize his glory which is full of grace and truth.

Some saw the glory

As a tiny baby just hours old, Jesus’ glory *was* recognized by a few people.

His **parents**—thanks to the revelation they received through the angels (Matthew 1:20-21; Luke 1:28-38)—understood who their boy was: the Holy One who would save people from their sins. The **shepherds**—through the revelation of the angels (Luke 2:8-20)—knew that their Messiah, the Lord, had come to earth.

Simeon and Anna—when Jesus was eight days old—recognized Jesus as the Messiah, the glory of Israel (Luke 2:25-38). The **Magi**—who were not even Jewish—recognized that the King of the Jews had been born through the revelation by God in the stars (Matthew 2:1-11).

Here was Jesus, a newborn baby. And yet for those who were listening and watching, they saw the glory of God.

Why come as one of us?

Jesus came to earth as a man to do what no other man could do—to live a sinless life and offer that life to the rest of the world. He *had* to come to earth as a man, not only to show the grace and the love of God in a way that we could understand, but also because only a man could regain what man had lost.

Jesus is called the “last Adam” (1 Corinthians 15:45) because he did what the first Adam could not do, and neither could the rest of us. Since the time of Adam, many have fallen into the temptation of trying to offer themselves to God as a worthy sacrifice. The reality is that *Jesus* is the only spotless Lamb of God worthy to be offered as a sacrifice for sin.

As we recognize this truth, as we recognize Jesus and his glory, then and only then are we able to experience new birth—the salvation of our souls.

Distracted by other glories

How is it that year after year those who profess to be followers of Jesus Christ yield little or no fruit in their lives? How is it that the lifestyles of

believers and non-believers are often hard to distinguish?

Why do the things of this world hold so much of our interest—those of us who profess Jesus Christ as Lord?

Jesus Christ is the GLORY of God! Yet the glory of human achievement, desires, and dreams dominates the thinking of so many Christians.

I believe that we have not recognized the glory of Jesus. Instead of being introduced to Jesus and the glory of his grace and truth, we get connected to everything *but* Jesus. No wonder we often see very little change in believers.

We are *changed* by seeing Jesus. We are transformed by *his glory*—not our own efforts.

Be transformed

When we recognize the glory of Jesus we are changed. When

we come into his presence we are transformed.

2 Corinthians 3:18 says, “And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”

The glory shown in that baby Jesus was the same that he has now in the presence of the Father. When will we recognize that this is what we desperately, desperately need?

Lord Jesus, open our eyes to the light and the glory of the Gospel.

It is you. You are light. You are the glory.

Transform us into your likeness! **SR**

Rev. Nathan Crandall is associate pastor of the Milton, Wis., Seventh Day Baptist Church.



They saw the Glory

Jesus' parents

(Matthew 1:20-21;

Luke 1:28-38)

The shepherds (Luke 2:8-20)

Simeon and Anna

(Luke 2:25-38)

The Magi (Matthew 2:1-11)

Robe Nominations

The SDB Women's Society is accepting nominations for the 2009 Robe of Achievement. Please see last month's *SR* for more details.

You may apply on-line at www.sdbwboard.org, or send your nomination to:

Laura Hambleton
SDB Robe Nominations
1568 Megan Bay Circle
Holly Hill, FL 32117



Deadline is
March 31,
2009

Enter our new

E-Card Contest

Our SDB E-card site now allows you to send e-invitations, where you can include a map to your event, keep track of responses, and more!

To celebrate this addition, we are holding a contest.

What: Design a Postcard, Flash, or Invitation

Where: Submit it to
webmaster@seventhdaybaptist.org

When: Deadline is January 20, 2009.

All Voting will be on-line

Winner will get a new SDB logo hooded sweatshirt and your name will be announced in the March *SR*

See www.seventhdaybaptist.org for complete rules and submission requirements



Under the lifeguard tower



***Recognizing that
the mind is where
battles are won or lost,
I will keep this
beach experience
in my “memory
arsenal” for future
reference.***

I wish you could have seen the water change colors as the rain pelted the waves. Shifting shades of green and blues danced and swirled under the darkening clouds, with just enough light shining through to promise that the storm would end.

The four of us—Perry and Linda Cain, and Rich and I—didn't care. It was strikingly beautiful there under the lifeguard tower.

We were damp indeed, the rain having caught us midway through our shell collecting, but we were safe. “The best things in life are free,” we agreed.

The sudden shower would be the most memorable moment of our time together when the Cains stopped by on their way to a seminar in Tampa.

Later it occurred to me that this experience is like being sheltered beneath God's mercy seat under His wings. Peering out at the storms of life from this vantage point, I can feel secure and even stand in awe

at the power and handiwork of God.

How wonderful that we can renew our minds with thoughts of God's promises for the future and memories of God's goodness in the past. Recognizing that the mind is where battles are won or lost, I will keep this beach experience in my “memory arsenal” for future reference.

Speaking of good memories, a host of them tumbled my way when I read the report of the Women's Society of the First Alfred (N.Y.) Seventh Day Baptist Church. Its mention of the 100th anniversary of their Parish House took me back 50 years to its halls, stairway, classrooms, meeting rooms, bathroom, and porch leading to the sanctuary.

All my pre-teen feelings rush back to me as I recall my times there: embarrassment at my younger brother's announcement about the new undergarments I was sporting now that I was old enough to wear stockings and high heels; impish delight in flying paper airplanes in Sabbath School class, followed by the humbling apology I was directed to offer to my teacher (my father driving me to her house to do so); half-stifled giggles when we girls, in our junior

choir robes, sat down and our hoop skirts stood up; quiet wonderings about what to do with the piece of steak that just wouldn't seem to get chewed up enough to swallow as we sat oh-so-properly at the long fellowship tables “enjoying” the meal before business meetings.

I did learn things there besides social graces. Mrs. Edith Place had us memorize and recite Psalms 23 and 100 as well as the Beatitudes, Ten Commandments, and all the names of the books of the Bible.

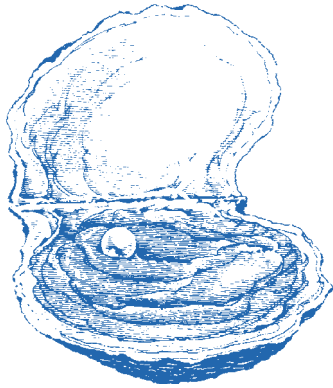
Mrs. Mary Clare, as superintendent, gathered all the children's classes together long enough to take the Sabbath School offering and encourage each of us to walk to the front and recite any memory verse. Popular ones were “Jesus wept” (John 11:35) and “God is love” (1 John 4:16). I can still see the smug grins on the older boys who opted for the shortest verse of the Bible.

As we got older, my father—as assistant pastor to Pastor Hurley Warren—began a youth group and church membership class. Several of my classmates and I were baptized as a result.

“How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news” (Isaiah 52:7). How beautiful I felt coming up from the baptismal waters where Jesus had cleansed me.

My thoughts today seem to begin and end with water. Glory to God the Father and to His Son Jesus Christ for the times of refreshing His living water provides.

Thank you, Alfred ladies, for sharing good things to think about, and thanks to you other women's groups who brought reports to General Conference. We'll share more from those in future issues. **SR**



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

The Ladies Aid saw the need

One of the pleasures of a historian is the opportunity to run across items from the past that highlight old stereotypes.

The following comes from an age when the term “Ladies Aid” was considered primarily as an agency in the church to do the work that needed to be done, but was often neglected by the opposite gender.

The Ladies Aid

The old church bell had long been cracked
its call was but a groan;
It seemed to sound a funeral knell
with every broken tone.
“We need a bell” the brethren said,
“But taxes must be paid.
We have no money we can spare—
Just ask the Ladies Aid.”

The shingles on the roof were old;
the rain came down in rills...
The brethren slowly shook their heads
and spoke of monthly bills.
The chairman of the Board arose
and said, “I am afraid
that we shall have to lay the case
before the Ladies Aid.”

The carpet had been patched and patched
'til quite beyond repair,
And through the aisles and on the steps
the boards showed hard and bare.
“It is too bad,” the brethren said:
“An effort must be made
to raise an interest on the part
by members of the Aid.”

The preacher’s stipend was behind,
the poor man blushed to meet
the grocer and the butcher as
they passed him on the street.
But nobly spoke the brethren then,
“Pastor, you shall be paid!
We’ll call upon the treasurer
of our good Ladies Aid.”

“Ah!” said the men, “the way to heav’n
is long and hard and steep,
with slopes of care on either side,
the path is hard to keep.
We cannot climb the heights alone,
our hearts are sore dismayed;
We ne’er shall get to heav’n at all
without the Ladies Aid.”



How refreshing it is to see that the women in the church are often the ones who see the need. Then they urge the men to do their share of mundane upkeep of the less glamorous work in the total maintenance and ministry of the church.

The Ladies are no longer just an “Aid”; they are the backbone and part and parcel of the church. **SR**

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The 2009 Directors of the Board of Christian Education

“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 brotherly 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. But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins” (2 Peter 1:5-9, NIV).

Fourteen people oversee the ministry of the Seventh Day Baptist Board of Christian Education. We want to be helpful as Seventh Day Baptists grow in the knowledge and qualities of Christ.

Each one of the 14 Directors is willing to listen to you and to hear your ideas about how this ministry can be more effective. If you know any of these people, please feel free to contact them directly.

If you want to pass information along through our office, just call (607) 587-8527, or write sdbbce@educatingchristians.org.

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More than one way to Memorize

The Board'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



Guyana going local

by Kirk Looper

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

The people in Guyana have worked hard to develop the churches and ministries that they have today. God has been gracious to them as they dwell in His Kingdom, doing the work that has been given to them.

In an effort to further their ministry and aid in the development of their Conference, we have come to an important decision. We have voted that the land in Guyana that is presently owned by the SDB Missionary Society, USA and Canada, should be sold to the local Conference there. This property is located on Gordon Street, Kitty, Georgetown.

The land consists of a manse (for housing), and a building that holds their church services. The building used for the church is under construction. We have tried to develop it into a better structure, which will allow them to use it more fully. We encourage them to use it as a conference center—including their Conference office—as well as a meeting place for seminars, Conference meetings, and gatherings for the pastors and other leaders.

In an effort to provide an equitable way to deal with this transfer, it was decided that the Guyana Conference would pay \$90,000 U.S. This cost was derived from the amount of expended funds for the refurbishing and development of the two buildings.

Payment will include a single sum of \$40,000 with the remainder taken from the funds set aside for them by the Missionary Society each year. These accounts were established for the repair and upkeep of the buildings anyway. This would amount to \$5,000 per year for 10 years.

The \$40,000 is slowly being raised through donations. We encourage those who want to help in this



project to send their donations to the Missionary Society. Please add a memo stating that it is for the purchase of the Kitty property.

These funds will be held separate from the other projects that are taking place in Guyana such as the camp, local church buildings, etc. The Missionary Society wants to transfer ownership of the property immediately.

Late in the 1990s a project was begun to repair and refurbish the manse. Val Bennett—at that time a member of the Hope SDB Church in Philadelphia—managed the rewiring, plumbing, and development of the building. The goal was to make it conducive to house the pastors of

the Kitty Seventh Day Baptist Church. The Conference took a room for its office. A water supply was added, outbuildings were repaired, and the drainage for a watershed was improved.

In 2000, the project to develop the church building into a conference center began. Val Bennett returned to assist in this project as well. The basement was refurbished into a small chapel, and the second floor was given a new entrance, exit door, and stairs.

The whole building has been rewired. The fixtures on the second floor, along with the plumbing, is to be completed later. Most of the roof has been replaced and is much improved. Recently the construction has been stalled as we work on the exchange of ownership.

We are anxious to see how these changes will enhance the work in Guyana. We pray that they will be able to use the facilities to increase their ministry and outreach.

It is exciting to encourage them in their work there and we feel that owning their own facility will empower them to make full use of the buildings. **SR**



the BEACON

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

Dec. 2008

The “not-quite in shape” father replies

by Thomas Davis, Marlboro, N.J.

From Beacon editor Christopher Davis:

In the July/August issue, I wrote an article about the prize of eternal life, and how we need to be “in shape” to run the race of life. This is my father’s reply to me.

★ ★ ★

My friends were disappointed when they heard that they weren’t mentioned by name in your recent article. After they read it, they weren’t as upset.

I know that I’m not exactly in shape, but I’m trying. Exercise needs to be ongoing. Knowing that a big bike ride is coming, I can change my regimen to be ready. If I worked a little harder on a regular basis, I would always be ready.

We need to work at our Christian life, like you said. The problem is, we don’t always get advance notice of a “big ride.” The thing that causes us trouble just happens.

Life isn’t a challenge you can “cram” for. Satan can throw trouble our way at any time, or maybe our time on earth could be over in the blink of an eye, and then it’s too late. If you aren’t ready, it could be a long, frustrating, or permanently hot ride.

You don’t always know what the next task/job/challenge/opportunity will be. On those long bike rides I’ve taken, there are cue sheets with the

***We need
to work at our
Christian life,
like you said.
The problem is,
we don’t always
get advance notice
of a “big ride.”***

directions; markings on the road saying “Turn here”; support staff checking to be sure you are where you need to be.

Life isn’t like that. There are no printed road maps saying, “Make this career choice” or “Marry that person.” We have to work hard to be in tune with God so we will know what His will for us is and make our choices accordingly.

The great thing about God is, He will help you on your ride. Like everything else, the more you have trained, the easier the task; the more we will be able to know what God wants us to do, when to do it, and how to get it done.

Practice is essential. Taking lessons (church, Bible study, prayer) gains you nothing if you don’t prac-

tice. Living the life that is pleasing to God can’t be turned on and off. It has to be ongoing.

When will you be the example that someone else needs to see? Will you make choices that bring glory to God and be where He needs you to be? Just like training for a ride helps to get you ready to ride, living the life that glorifies God gets you ready for an eternal life of glorifying the Lord.

Eternal life with God. Won’t that be amazing?

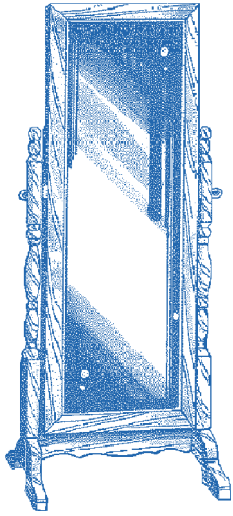
Making the choice to accept Jesus Christ’s redeeming sacrifice is the first step. It’s not a “one-and-done” thing. It is a continuous, conscious choice—one that takes effort, an effort that is easier with practice. I may be physically not quite in shape, but I’m working at it, the same way I am continually working on my relationship with my Savior.

So let’s practice together, you and me. I’ve tried to “Train you up in the way you should go,” but the choices are yours, and more and more as you get older and more independent.

If we train together, you can teach me, and we can encourage each other.

Let’s set a goal: Eternal life with our Lord. Let’s train together.

Let’s be prepared to work in God’s Kingdom, here and now, and for all eternity. And if we can ride our bikes together, that would be great too. **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*

Like pulling teeth



Trust: "A firm belief or confidence in the reliability of another person or thing; confident expectation, anticipation, or hope."

I possess a number of unwanted "talents." Regrettably.

First, I have an uncanny ability to fall down steps and trip over things. I also have a propensity to burn myself while working in the kitchen, and I'm totally inept when it comes to reading maps, following directions, or dealing with anything electronic.

And even though I helped edit the *Sabbath Recorder* for many years, I've had a lifelong capacity to spell multiple [sic] words incorrectly.

In spite of my many shortcomings, I do have two "good" talents.

Right now, I can't remember what my Number One ability is. (Maybe it's my capacity to forget things.) However, I'm absolutely certain what my Number Two positive talent is: pulling teeth.

I'm not talking symbolically here, as in "Getting the crook to confess was like pulling teeth." I literally mean *pulling teeth*. Or, more precisely, pulling the loose teeth of my grandchildren.

I didn't purposely start out to be a tooth-puller.

For one thing, I don't really enjoy sticking my hand in the mouths of little humans who have jaws that can clamp down on adult fingers like

crocodiles crushing legs in their vise-grip mouths.

This "tooth pulling thing" slowly and unintentionally became a second vocation.

The first time I used this innate skill was last year, in the bathroom of a local restaurant. My oldest (Wisconsin) granddaughter had a loose tooth that was really hurting, especially when she ate.

Jordan's father couldn't grasp the small, slick tooth with his large fingers. Mother Jennifer couldn't help either.

Jenny honestly and unabashedly describes herself as a "wimp" when it comes to pulling teeth. She did it once, and that was it. So, it was "Nonni" to the rescue.

I didn't have a string to tie to the restroom's doorknob and I had left my pliers at home. (What was I thinking?) Following a brief, soothing speech, I soaked a small piece of toilet paper with water and used it to grab hold of the tooth. Then a quick but firm pull, and *Voila!* Mission accomplished.

A few months ago, I received an unexpected late-night phone call. One of Jordan's front teeth needed removing. My embarrassed daughter explained that her husband had to go back to work and the tooth needed to come out now. Fifteen minutes later, I was making a house call.

As the acknowledged "family expert" in this area, I delivered my now-familiar brief but calming speech to my granddaughter. Then I grasped Jordan's tooth with a wet facial tissue and expertly executed

one firm tug. Success once again, and no tears. (I'm soooo good!)

At church the following Sabbath, I bragged to an older parishioner about my newfound calling. The anonymous white-haired woman (to save her embarrassment, I won't mention Virginia Fitzrandolph's name) smiled at me and announced, "You can pull my teeth anytime."

I appreciated Spin's vote of confidence, but I've decided to stick to grandkids and not grandparents.

By treating Jordan with love and respect, I slowly gained her trust. But it wasn't easy. Besides the pain, she was deathly afraid that she would swallow her loose tooth.

I could have made light of Jordan's concerns and called her a "sissy." Instead, I spoke quietly and calmly, acknowledging her fears and assuring her that everything would be okay.

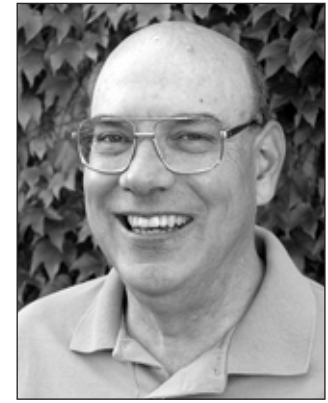
We humans, young and old, have many fears. But as we learn to trust God and rest in His loving arms, those fears dissipate. He speaks quietly and calmly through His Word, assuring us that "everything will be okay."

Over the years, I've learned to truly trust Him. How about you? **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

Live and pray in unity

While studying Jesus' prayer in John 17:20-26 recently, I asked myself, "Why did Jesus consider unity in the Church to be so important?"

In verse 23, Jesus asks that we be brought to complete unity to, first, let the world know that God sent Jesus, and second, to let the world know that God loves us as He loves Jesus. Simply put, the unity of the Church is proof to the world that God loves us and sent His Son for us. (Sounds like John 3:16 doesn't it?)

All of this makes unity in the Church of utmost importance—it is evidence of God's salvation for the world!

What destroys unity within the Church? To me the primary enemy of unity is "dissension."

Paul explains how the body needs to function together as a unit. Detachment from the body may impair the body (as when a member of the body ceases to function), but dissension stays connected and acts as a cancer that works its way through the whole body. If left untreated, it will eventually destroy the body.

Dissension in the body of Believers often comes in the form of power struggles or through constant complaining—usually directed at the pastor.



Dissension to God is more than dissent or disagreement. Dissension comes about when disagreement turns into deeds of darkness (Romans 13:12-13), that manifest themselves in the form of greed, perversion, anger and hatred.

Here's a sampling of what God says about dissension:

- A scoundrel and villain always stirs up dissension (Prov. 6:14)
- Hatred stirs up dissension (Prov. 10:12)
- A hot-tempered man stirs up dissension (Prov. 15:18)
- A perverse man stirs up dissension (Prov. 16:28)
- A greedy man stirs up dissension (Prov. 28:25)
- An angry man stirs up dissension (Prov. 29:22), and
- The Lord hates and finds detestable a man who stirs up dissension among his brothers (Prov. 6:19)

Unity is not uniformity, but dissension has no place in the body of Christ. I am asking my brothers and sisters from around the Conference to pray that dissension will be removed from the Church so the Church will be brought to complete unity.

Pray for those who are stirring up dissension among the body of Believers. If needed, pray that the steps Jesus set forth in Matthew 18:15-17 will be used to bring these brothers or sisters back into the fold.

Unity in the body of Christ is worth praying over continually. Here's how Romans 15:5-6 puts it: "*May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*"

We want the world to know that "God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Live in unity, pray in unity—for God's sake and for His glory!

My prayer for all of us is that we maintain the unity of the Spirit through the peace of Christ! **SR**



by Executive Director
Rob Appel

It takes five!

Today's churches need more than just preachers and teachers. We need leadership from the Biblical model. This includes three additional functions that we seem to have forgotten. As basketball analyst Dick Vitale would say, "It takes five, baby!"

In Ephesians 4:11 we see all five categories of church leadership:

"It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers."

Not only did Jesus bless some to be teachers and pastors for the established congregations, but he gave additional gifts of apostleship, prophesying, and evangelism. All five of these church functions were designed to fully equip the Church in the task of spreading the Gospel to the world.

•**Pastors** nurture and protect. They are caregivers of the community and they focus on the protection and spiritual maturity of God's flock.

•**Teachers** understand and explain. They are the communicators of God's truth and wisdom and they help others remain biblically grounded to better discern God's will.

•**Apostles** extend the Gospel. They ensure that the faith is transmitted from one context to another and from one generation to the next. They are always thinking about the future, establishing the Church in new contexts, developing leaders, and networking.

•**Prophets** know God's will. They

are tuned in to God and His truth for today. They bring correction and challenge the dominant assumptions we inherit from the culture.

•**Evangelists** recruit others to the cause. They call for a personal response to God's salvation in Christ, and also draw believers to engage the wider mission.

So if this is the correct model of the Church—caregiving Preachers, spiritual leading Teachers, mission-minded Apostles, Planners and Administrators, and Evangelists to convert the unsaved—*where is that Church today?* We see congregations primarily being cared for by the preachers and teachers. What happened to the other three leadership types—the mission minded, the planners, and the converters?

During the centuries when Christianity dominated the culture, the Church acquired a basic non-mission posture. Mission beyond the walls of the institution was downplayed because every citizen was already considered at least a nominal Christian. This called for pastoral and teaching ministries to care for and instruct the congregation, designed to draw immature believers back into the fold.

So, these two functions were eventually instituted as the leadership offices in the Church, and the other three roles slowly faded away as unnecessary. Consequently the Apostles, Prophets, and Evangelist

functions were secondary or non-existent to the Church's structure.

What that leaves today are sidelined people with mission, planning, and converting types of gifts. This is not to say that these ministries have totally disappeared. However, many within the Church today have managed to fill these roles without necessarily being tagged or recognized as "apostles" or "prophets." Many have tended to exercise their gifts outside the framework of the local church.

This diversion of apostles, prophets and evangelists from church leadership has in many cases been disastrous for the local church and has damaged the cause of Christ and his mission for the local community. This narrowing of fivefold to two-fold ministry is one of the main factors in the decline of the evangelical church in North America today.

If we want a vibrant purpose-driven church, we simply have to have an operational leadership structure with all five functions connected. It's that simple!

The Church requires pioneering, innovative, organizationally adaptive, and externally focused leadership—and this means a five-fold understanding of ministry leadership.

It is time for the Church to recognize the importance of all five of the Ephesians 4 leadership functions. We must rediscover the lost potential of biblical leadership that has been absent for too long. **SR**



Financial or spiritual calamity?

by Myron McPherson, guest writer from Miami, Fla.

Serving as a church treasurer for many years, it is evident that we are entering a period of tough economic times. Our Wednesday food pantry distribution program, established by Pastor Shirley Morgan at the Miami SDB Church in 2005, faces ever-increasing needs from the surrounding community each week.

Pastor Andrew Samuels has said several times, "There is no scarcity with God." Yet, the weeks when the total tithes and offerings are insufficient to meet expenses, that statement can seem questionable.

In Miami, we have some at-a-distance members who are unable to attend church every week, but who remain faithful tithers. Their tithe remains a large blessing to the church. In fact, they are a key ingredient in our church's ability to cover our expenditures.

I think of other members who are elderly. Once these faithful givers have departed, I wonder if younger members will step up to fill the gap? We believe that evangelism and gaining new members is a solution to our financial concerns, even though new members may not be large or steady givers at first.

Our church here in Florida has pitched a large tent in the yard and hosted weeklong evangelistic crusades. We've held "Community Fun Days" where we provide games for the kids and free food for everyone. We've held church picnics in various parks. We've held church banquets and self-denial concerts. Our primary goal is bringing others to a saving knowledge of Jesus.

The evangelism approach that seems to work best is "each one bring one." Do you know anyone in your circle of acquaintances who is in need of a church home? If *we* don't invite them, who will?

As we see financial bankruptcies on Wall Street, we're also seeing spiritual bankruptcies on Main Street. It seems these two events

may be related. In fact, chances are one is causing the other. Just as power tends to corrupt, wealth tends to reduce our reliance on God's provision. The pursuit of wealth can undermine our ability to seek God's spiritual wealth.

I recently saw a factoid on the internet that said, "If your household annual income is over \$50,000, then you are in the top 1% of the richest in the world. Even if you are 'scraping by' on the national minimum wage you are still richer than 87% of the globe."

When Morgan asked me to write this article, he might have been expecting some pearls of wisdom on investing in the stock market, one of my personal interests.

That sort of investing has provided mixed results and many reminders of how difficult it can be to try to outsmart Wall Street.

The lesson worth remembering is this: seek God's *spiritual* wealth first. That is the best way to avoid bankruptcy. **SR**

Please see Morgan Shepard's note about this chart on page 24

SDB General Conference Operating Budget Jan - Oct 2008

Board / Agency	Needed Giving	Received Jan -	Over / (Short)
	Towards Budget	Oct '08	
	Jan - Oct '08		
Conference Services*	\$ 165,132.50	\$ 188,259.53	\$ 23,127.03
Council On Ministry	54,102.50	43,652.19	(10,450.31)
Missionary Society	48,798.33	37,146.14	(11,652.19)
Tract & Communication Council	47,500.00	38,637.50	(8,862.50)
Board of Christian Education	44,703.33	31,033.11	(13,670.22)
Women's Society	24,750.00	16,233.28	(8,516.72)
Total	\$ 384,986.67	\$ 354,961.75	\$ (30,024.92)

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

Association dedicates camp's new building

by Voni Mattison



On a beautiful Sabbath afternoon in October, over 70 enthusiastic members and friends of the Allegheny (N.Y.) Association attended the dedication of the Crandall Building at Camp Harley Sutton. What was but a vision a few short years ago now stands as a “self-contained” dorm/conference meeting building.

This new facility includes two “bunk rooms” that easily accommodate eight bunk beds each; two bathrooms (handicap accessible) equipped with showers, toilets, and wash sinks; and a meeting room that includes a stove, microwave, sink, and refrigerator.

Crandall is insulated and heated, with its own parking lot, thus available for use year-round. The 2008 camping season utilized the Crandall dorm and the reviews were quite positive.

Peggy Chroniger, granddaughter of Harley Sutton—for whom the camp in Alfred Station, N.Y., is named—led the dedication. A “re-enactment” of a day at camp served as the order of dedication. We began with Rise and Shine (yes, we sang it with gusto!), asking the camp trust-

ees and Camp Planning Committee to rise so our appreciative warmth could shine on them.

Elianna and Madge Chroniger then delivered some beautiful poetic thoughts for Morning Devotions. David Hauber led us in a responsive reading for Morning Bible Class. The passage was from Ecclesiastes 3. “How Great Thou Art” aptly described our Lord’s handiwork as the great selection for Music.

Peggy had us “play” a different kind of Recreation game. It was “How Do You Like Your Neighbor?” We all agreed that we very much like the camp’s neighbor who sold us a parcel of land, enabling us to have the room to build our new dorm. We were also reminded that the Allegany County Area Foundation was very neighborly in giving us a grant to help us along.

Afternoon Bible Class began with Mae Bottoms reading Scripture and then trustee chair Lyle Sutton led us down “Memory Lane” with a wonderful synopsis of the preparation (tearing down the old metal, smelly, damp, really kinda “yucky” building) to construction


of our wonderful new structure. He thanked the many people who came from hither and yon, as well as the “locals” who spent hours, days, weeks, and even months on this project.

Gratitude went out to those who funded our project, including Association churches, the SDB Memorial Board, private donors, and the Allegheny Area Foundation. Even though the actual monetary amount needed was more than twice what was originally anticipated, everyone dug deep and came through to see that Crandall became a reality.

Kevin Kenyon and Pastor Pat Bancroft led Vespers, reading several thankful and enlightening notes from those who actually were able to enjoy Crandall during the camping season. (The recurring theme seemed to center around indoor bathrooms!!) This gave us opportunity to once again thank our Lord for His provisions.

Campfire came near the end of the day. The beautiful harmony of singing “They’ll Know We Are Christians by Our Love” brought back blessed memories to many of us!

Lights Out quieted the crowd. Pastor Herlitz Condison shared a Senior Camp memory (that recurrent bathroom theme again) before offering a prayer of gratitude and dedication to our Heavenly Father. We crossed arms “right-over-left” for the Youth Rally Song. A slide show of the construction process ended our “Day at Camp.”

Thanks go out to all the SDBs who came to join in this big event. We praise God for His gift of this building that we hope will bring about many blessings in the future and help the Allegheny Association spread His Word to the world. 

New members

Houston, TX

Jim Barclift, pastor
Joined after testimony
Eric Thomasson

Metro Atlanta, GA

John J. Pethtel, pastor
Joined after baptism
Daniel Lovelace
Michael Lovelace
Joel Hargett

White Cloud, MI

Bernie Wethington, pastor
Joined by letter
Brian Hall

Marriage

Burns – Cruzan. David Lee Burns and Jacqueline Ruth Cruzan were united in marriage on October 12, 2008 in White Cloud, MI. Rev. Bernie Wethington officiated.

Obituary

Stewart.—Mary W. Stewart, 98, passed away on October 21, 2008, at Wheaton Franciscan Health-care in Racine, Wis.

Mary was born in Albion, Wis., on October 14, 1910, the daughter of E. Glenn and Matie (Head) Williams. From 1923 until her death, she was a member of the Albion Seventh Day Baptist Church, a church where her grandfather was one of the first members in the 1800s.

Mary attended Milton (Wis.) College for two years, then received her degree from the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

On June 26, 1935, she was married to Hugh Stewart. They had 63 happy years enjoying family, friends, many activities, traveling and just being together.

Mary taught mathematics and Latin in several Racine area schools. She joined a number of retired educators associations, and was a member of AAUW for 40 years. She enjoyed playing bridge with friends in various groups.

She is survived by a niece, G. Ann Williams; a nephew, Rollin Williams; and a grandnephew, Marc Williams. She was preceded in death by her sister, Gleneta, and a brother, Charles. Mary said repeatedly that she felt blessed to have such close neighbors and friends as Alice, Marlene, Lorraine, Joe and others. They truly sustained her and gave her comfort.

A graveside service was held on October 26, 2008, at the Milton Cemetery, with Rev. Michael Burns officiating.

Death Notice

Florence Ethlyn (Sayre) Shadel, 100, of Milton, Wis., died on November 1, 2008.

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

Thank You!!

We thank you for your faithful giving during 2008. The chart on page 22 summarizes the total giving for January thru October.

While some groups are doing well, others are short in meeting their 2008 needs. As we end the year, please consider a gift to help in the multiple ministries of the SDB General Conference. Your gift makes a difference wherever it goes.

—Morgan Shepard

2008 SDB General Conference Operating Budget

Board / Agency	Monthly Operating Budget	Monthly Giving Towards Budget	Received Oct '08	Over / (Short)
Conference Services*	\$ 22,635.13	\$ 16,513.25	\$ 18,209.08	\$ 1,695.83
Council On Ministry	13,017.33	5,410.25	4,618.89	(791.36)
Missionary Soc.	25,083.33	4,879.83	3,272.89	(1,606.94)
Tract Council	12,142.17	4,750.00	2,796.28	(1,953.72)
Christian Edu.	9,676.67	4,470.33	4,258.31	(212.02)
Women's Soc.	3,116.67	2,475.00	133.33	(2,341.67)
Total	\$ 85,671.30	\$ 38,498.67	\$ 33,288.78	\$ (5,209.89)

* 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	\$ (30,438.31)	92% Of Budget
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Morgan Shepard, Treasurer

World Federation Treasurer Thanks You

The SDB World Federation is extremely thankful for all those who gave so willingly to help with the expenses of our 2008 sessions.

The meetings in Kenosha, Wisconsin, were a great time of fellowship and inspiration. Morning Praise was led by Jan Lek and the Young Adult Pre-Con. We had our usual business and committee meetings, reports from each Conference, seminars and evening worship. On Sabbath day we all rode a bus to the Milton church for Sabbath School (where several foreign delegates led classes), worship, and a special meal. Then we toured the SDB Conference Center in Janesville.

Forty-one people represented 10 different countries. The World Fed sessions began with a Parade of Flags, which was repeated to help kick off the USA and Canada General Conference. More coverage of the meetings will be in the February SR.

I wish all of you could have participated in the meetings of this special group. As treasurer for the last 10 years, I have been privileged to attend the 2003 session in Brazil and this summer in Wisconsin. I consider myself blessed to have met so many wonderful Seventh Day Baptists from around the world and to call them my friends.

Again, thank you for giving to our cause. Seventh Day Baptists around the world are truly wonderful, giving people. —Luan Ellis



The **Week of Prayer** booklets were written by Jan and Ruth Lek of the Netherlands. Let us unite in prayer around the world from **January 4-10, 2009**. Booklets will be mailed to each church in the U.S. and Canada, and will be at our website (www.seventhdaybaptist.org).

We also invite you to take up a special **Offering for the World Federation** on January 10th.



Ask Sophie

Wow! I am so excited about the e-mail questions from you folks! You want to know about beds on the campus of Lancaster Bible College for Conference 2009:

Dear Sophie,
We were hoping to bring our parents to Conference 2009 (seeing how they have been Conference dropouts since 2000). We were just wondering what the on-campus housing arrangements are. They were wondering if there were going to be apartments or suite

rooms available. Three two-year-olds take up a lot of space and can be quite noisy (so Mom and Dad say) and we were hoping that maybe Grandad and Grandma Jo could stay with us—built in babysitters! Mom says that each college has their own rules about how many children can stay in rooms, so we thought that we would ask so they can make plans and start saving!!

Thanks Sophie,
The Camenga Triplets

Hi Sophie,
Will there be any apartments available on campus for a family of six? If so, do you know the cost of an apartment for the week?

Thanks,
S & B

Okay. Here's the deal... although my people can't tell me exactly all the details just yet! One dorm is all suites. A suite is four bedrooms with two baths and a small "sitting room." (FYI: I have learned to sit on command now; and I am good at fetching... I don't want to talk about "Stay!") Anyway, there are also

apartments with two or three bedrooms with a bath and living room/kitchenette. Sleeping on the floor is allowed—my favorite! (Air mattress optional.) That goes for ALL rooms. I know you didn't ask, but there is also a regular kind of dorm (that doesn't have AC). I know you asked how much you will have to save up and all my people will tell me right now is that it will not cost more than \$20 a person per night. It will be less for anyone doing my thing: sleeping on the floor.

I will get back to you with more info later on. But remember, Conference is on a gorgeous campus in beautiful Amish country. You'll love the horses, buggies, and quilts! I'll tell you about the wonderful places to visit when you're not busy with Conference stuff.

So e-mail me your questions:
AskSophieNow@aol.com

Department Index for 2008

(Feature and Local news

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KEVIN'S

ORNER

A Christmas newsletter I'd like to see

'Tis the season for family Christmas newsletters. Here's one that the Lord could receive:

Quite a year for the Butlers! You would think that with kids growing up and moving on, life would be quieter. *Blah, blah...*

[Lord, thank You for getting us through the highs and lows of 2008. When we got so darned busy and self-focused, please forgive us.]

Our "little blondie" is married! **Jenny and Greg** tied the knot on the first day of summer. Dad enjoyed officiating and it all centered around their favorite pastime: baseball. We even sang "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" during the wedding. *Blah, blah...*

[Father, where has the time gone? Didn't I walk Jenny to kindergarten just yesterday? I was scared to death hearing how much an "average wedding" cost these days, but forgot that we had an above-average, frugal and budget-minded girl. Thank You for blessing them with each other.]

Soon before the wedding, **Crystal** moved out of the house. She's got a great apartment with a girlfriend right in town. We don't mind it when she drops by to do her laundry or use the computer. She's still at Family Video and just started training as assistant manager. *Blah, blah...*

[God, I wish that I wasn't so excited when Crystal moved out—just so I could get a stupid office at home again. I'm so proud of her when I see her act so professionally at work, and flashing that smile that gets her more membership sign-ups and rentals than anybody! Thank You for blessing us with such a sweetheart.]

Matt and Danielle presented the world with our first grandchild! Adrik (means "of the Adriatic") arrived when we were stuck at Conference in early August. Janet flew out soon after and went out again with me after I finished with deadline. I'm sure most of you heard that Adrik was diagnosed with Cystic Fibrosis, but he's developing just fine so far. *Blah, blah...*

[Yes Lord, this was one of the sore spots for the year. The ecstasy of the birth somewhat "shut down" by the hard reality. Please continue to be with the young parents as they face uncertain times. Thank You for placing them near Danielle's family and a good SDB church.]

Jackson finished up a great freshman year at college, then served in Seattle with Summer Christian Service Corps. On the last day of his project he won the grand prize drawing at a huge Christian concert: an electric bass, his main instrument! He just auditioned (and got accepted) for a music minor along with his business major. *Blah, blah...*

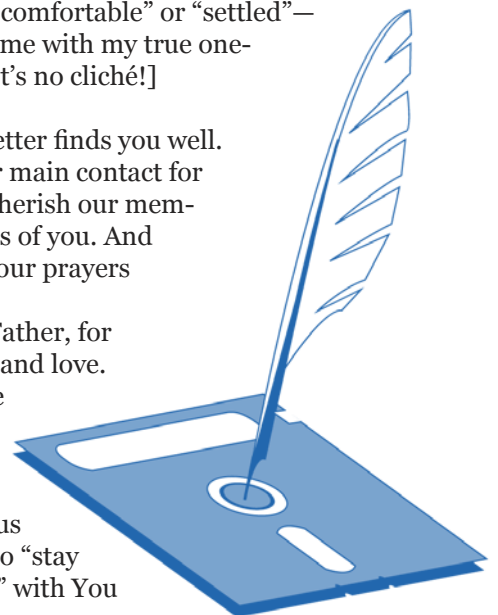
[Lord, how can our "baby" be leaving his teenage years so soon? He seems to be handling the academic and social challenges well. Thank You for that blessing. Please keep him safe and strong while he's away.]

So, it's "empty nest" for the **Old Folks** at home. Just the two of us. Where it all began. Two peas in a pod... Any other clichés I can add? Wedding prep and room changes and baby visits and runs to college have dominated the year. We did get to New England once, but most days we're just settled in comfortably together. *Blah, blah...*

[God, we sound so OLD! But I praise You that our love and closeness continue to grow. May we never get too "comfortable" or "settled"—You have blessed me with my true one-and-only, and that's no cliché!]

We hope this letter finds you well. Sorry if this is our main contact for the year, but we cherish our memories and thoughts of you. And we'd appreciate your prayers in return.

[Thank YOU, Father, for Your faithfulness and love. We could do or be nothing without You. I know that You are already "there" for us in 2009; help us to "stay on the same page" with You every day.]



I hope you've enjoyed
reading about the coming of
our Savior as a baby.

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Editor Butler



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