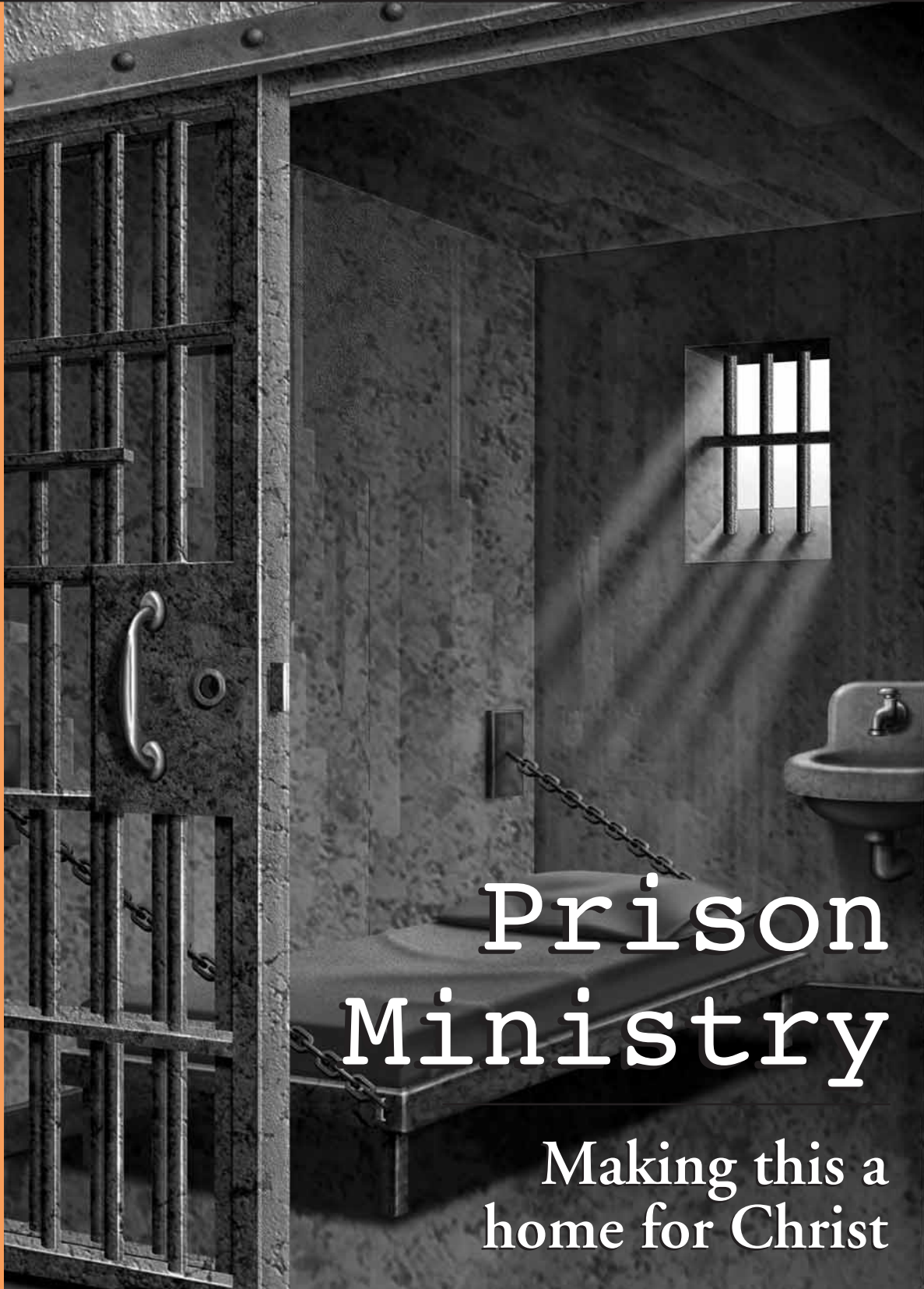




The Sabbath RECORDER

April 2008

News for and about Seventh Day Baptists



Prison Ministry

Making this a
home for Christ



Who are Seventh Day Baptists?

If you've never read *The Sabbath Recorder* before, you might be wondering who Seventh Day Baptists are. Like other Baptists, we believe in:

- salvation by grace through faith in Christ Jesus.
- the Bible as the inspired word of God. The Bible is our authority for our faith and daily conduct.
- baptism of believers, by immersion, witnessing to our acceptance of Christ as Savior and Lord.
- freedom of thought under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- the congregational form of church government. Every church member has the right to participate in the decision-making process of the church.

The seventh day

God commanded that the seventh day (Saturday) be kept holy. Jesus agreed by keeping it as a day of worship. We observe the seventh day of the week (Saturday) as God's Holy Day as an act of loving obedience—not as a means of salvation. Salvation is the free gift of God through Jesus our Lord. It is the joy of the Sabbath that makes SDBs just a little bit different.

For more information, write: The Seventh Day Baptist Center, 3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678. Phone (608) 752-5055; FAX (608) 752-7711; E-mail: sdbgen@seventhdaybaptist.org and the SDB Web site: www.seventhdaybaptist.org

SDB World Federation

***"Be Ready!
Christ Is Coming!"***
(Revelation 22:12-20)

July 28–August 2, 2008

Carthage College
Kenosha, Wis.

These meetings (held every five years) will feature worship, Bible studies, workshops, and business sessions. Delegates from all over the world plan to attend, at a cost of about \$2,000 per delegate.

***Would your church
like to sponsor an
overseas delegate?***

Contributions
may be sent to:

Treasurer Luan Ellis
614 Pleasant Valley Rd.
Alfred Station, NY 14803

**Thanks for your interest
in Seventh Day Baptists
around the world!**

Historical Society Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Seventh Day Baptist Historical Society will be held at the SDB Center in Janesville, Wis., on Sunday, May 11, 2008, at 2:00 p.m. in connection with the Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors.

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

Any member of a Seventh Day Baptist church may become a Contributing Member for a \$15 annual fee, or a Life Member for \$150, payable to the Historical Society at the SDB Center, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547.

A Tri-Centennial!

The First Seventh Day Baptist Church of Hopkinton in Ashaway, R.I., will celebrate a special "Homecoming Sabbath" on June 28, 2008. It has been **300 years** since we separated from the Newport (R.I.) SDB Church, although we had begun ministering in southwestern Rhode Island nearly 50 years earlier.

We invite you to attend this joyful occasion or send a memory/greeting we can share with others.

Send to: First SDB Church of Hopkinton
PO Box 438, 8 Church Street
Ashaway RI 02804





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Features

Lessons from the other side of the fence4

by Kory Geske

An unexpected letter from a prisoner opens the door to an unexpected ministry.

...and you came to visit me5

by Barry Babcock

What are your preconceptions about prisoners? About yourself? Prepare for a challenge to be more than you ever dared to imagine.

For the least of these brothers7

As told to Scott Hausrath

Imagine no phone calls, no letters, no visits—for years and years. One person can make a big difference.

What I've learned in prison9

by Matt Berg

Understanding that prisoners are simply people living in a different culture, this Leavenworth Chaplain (and SDB) provides practical steps toward a prison ministry of your own.

Departments

Women's Society 13	President's Page 20
<i>Not just talkin' turkey</i>	<i>The kindest people on earth</i>
Pearls from the Past 14	Alliance In Ministry 21
<i>How do you want your name listed?</i>	<i>What is the SDB plan?</i>
Christian Education 16	Financial Faith 22
<i>Many helps in Helping Hand</i>	<i>Medical mission needs your help</i>
Focus 17	Local news 23
<i>Good news in Tanzania</i>	<i>Leonardsville-Brookfield, NY</i>
The Beacon 18	Family flux 24-26
<i>Live up to your bumper stickers</i>	<i>New members, births</i> 24
Reflections 19	<i>Obituaries</i> 25-26
<i>"Breakin' outta da joint"</i>	Kevin's Korner 27
	<i>Whose image is this?</i>



Lessons from the other side of the fence

by Kory Geske

I received a letter from Jim (not his real name) a few months ago. He was writing from prison.

Recognizing his need for forgiveness, he had given his life to Jesus Christ and was looking for someone who would guide him in his journey.

Jim's options in prison were very limited; none were quite right for him. He was convinced of the Sabbath, but didn't fit in with Seventh-day Adventists. He had questions and no one to help him find answers. What he really wanted was someone he could call his pastor. Would I fill that role?

Other pastors had not answered Jim's letter. It would have been easy for me to throw it away, also.

I seldom write letters, much preferring short e-mails or phone calls, neither of which were options for Jim. So I answered his letter.

I couldn't cover all of his questions in great detail, so I explained a little about Seventh Day Baptists and what we believe, and I told him that our church would pray for him. I tried to encourage him as best I could, but I didn't really expect much to come of it.

Well, Jim wrote back. I prayed about it and found that I did have time to write again... and again.

We have been writing back and forth quite a bit since that first letter, and I really look forward to hearing from him.

Jim won't be out of prison for a long time, but he truly believes he is free to serve his Lord whether inside or outside the prison walls. And he truly is.

It's a joy to be able to share with Jim and listen to what God is doing in his life. I'm his pastor now, though I haven't met him. Still, what a joy it is!

Why are we so afraid to minister to prisoners? Here's an enormous mission field filled with

men and women at the end of their ropes, just begging for real freedom; freedom which can be found only in Jesus Christ.

We have what these inmates are begging for, but perhaps we don't think someone who has been convicted of a crime is worth our time, or worthy of God's grace. We would never say it, but sometimes our attitude says it for us.

God's grace is for *anyone* who will receive Him. He doesn't look any differently at a prisoner than He does at you or me. God loves us just the same, and He expects the same from those who call themselves Christ-like... "Christians."

The stigma of prison shouldn't affect the way we relate to those God loves. Jesus told a self-righteous generation, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means; 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (Matthew 9:12-13, NIV).

We are comfortable ministering to healthy “saints,” but we shy away from sick “sinners.” We willfully neglect the very people Jesus Christ called us to seek out and minister to. Admittedly, there is risk; there is *always* risk in ministry. Yet the blessings God has for us far outweigh the risk if we will take the time to care.

I look forward to continuing my relationship with Jim. Here is a man who knows what grace is, and I can learn from him.

When I think about it, I realize that the only difference between me and a lot of people serving time in prison is simply that God reached me before the police did. I was well on my way down that road.

It was only a matter of time before the stigma of jail or prison

Here is a man who knows what grace is, and I can learn from him.

would have been permanently attached to my name. By God’s grace, it never got that far.

I’m no stranger to ministering in prisons. I have spent a good deal of time visiting, talking, and praying with inmates at county jails and state prisons.

I didn’t ask for this type of ministry. But if we are going to minister for Jesus Christ, we should expect to minister to the same type of peo-

ple he did. What a joy it is! I would miss so much if I picked and chose who I would be willing to care for.

If you get the opportunity to show God’s love to someone who really needs it, I hope you’ll take the time to do it. People are people regardless of the mistakes they’ve made. God’s children are His children, no matter what sins they have had forgiven. Pray for the opportunity to be a blessing to someone in a position where blessings are scarce.

“Jim” gets the *Recorder* now. I’ll write again soon, buddy. Meanwhile, we’ll all be praying for you! **SR**

Rev. Kory Geske is pastor at the Battle Creek, Mich., SDB Church.

...and you came to visit me

by Barry Babcock

In the 1960s, there was a popular saying: “That just blows my mind.” Well, let me blow *your* mind by challenging some of the preconceptions you may hold.

I suspect that a great many of you are caught in one or more men-

Religious volunteers who come equipped with sound doctrine are desperately needed.

tal ruts. One could be what you think of when you hear the word “prisoner” or “convict.”

The prison population is like any other demographic or peo-



ple group. It can’t be defined by any broad generalization.

Your mental pictures of prison probably come from Hollywood or TV programs like “COPS.” But it’s not that simple. There is great diversity in prison, and there is great need.

When I was in prison, I worked for some time as a chaplain’s clerk. I saw that the chaplain is required to be all things to all religions. Since he is a state employee, he must be fair and even-handed when dealing with any

cont. on next page

religious group no matter what his personal beliefs are.

Religious volunteers who come equipped with sound doctrine are desperately needed. TV offers a brand of Christianity that will warp its followers, and cults thrive in the closed prison environment. Evangelism is crucial since most of these men will be released at some point, and only the Gospel will truly change them.

Who are you?

The second mental rut is who you think you are.

Since being released from prison, this is a battle I face every day, and I don't even pretend to have all the answers. I do know that a common element of all living things is change. There is no growth without change.

You may feel inadequate to minister to prisoners, but isn't God big enough to help? The real question is, "Is your heart big enough?"

If I know anything about Seventh Day Baptists, it's that they are some of the most loving, warm people it has ever been my pleasure to know.

I encourage you to try something new. By doing so, you will discover that, in Christ, you can be more than you ever dared to imagine!

We used to say, "You can't put God in a box." Is it possible that you have put what God can do with you—and through you—"in a box"? Don't let past experiences, hurts, or failures keep you from discovering what God has for you in this moment.

Be yourself!

You can do prison or jail ministry your way, whatever that may be. *Just be yourself!* You don't have to conduct a formal church service; simply lead a Bible study.

If you're ministering in a county jail, you could become involved in one-on-one visiting or counseling. Or, do something totally different. Creativity can be a big plus! Something really

As a poster boy for Amazing Grace, I can't begin to tell you how important it was for me to find people coming into prison who knew how to love, who were happy to see me, who ac-

***A single voice raised
within prison walls can have a
tremendous effect. Some inmates
will hang on your every word,
because they have just
received their first hard
dose of reality.***

new in prison has a draw all its own. There is nothing that will give you a greater impact than having a captive audience.

A single voice raised within prison walls can have a tremendous effect. Some inmates will hang on your every word, because they have just received their first hard dose of reality. Prison life can be very difficult to take, especially for young people. A friendly face is what they desperately hunger for.

You don't have to be profound, just be around. Be a friend.

Commended by Jesus

The bottom line is, Jesus commends all of this, and that should be the final word. In Matthew 25: 36-45, Jesus put prison ministry on his "short list" of what Christians should do.

Recently, my pastor pointed out that Christian duty is better than disobedience. Our hearts should be so filled with gratitude and wonder for what our loving God has done for us that acts of compassion flow naturally from our hearts.

cepted me as a brother in Christ. Be Christ in the world; be light in a very dark place.

Are you willing?

Have you heard Sarah Groves' new song, "When the Saints"? It contains a line about Paul and Silas in the prison yard. It really made me think. *What am I doing? What am I willing to risk, to suffer, for Christ? Is my love so feeble, is my faith so undersized, that I cannot step out and let God do something amazing in me?*

Find a jail or prison chaplain and tell him you want to "try it on for size." Then follow his advice. Most likely, he will be pleased to hear from you.

Meanwhile, you may find yourself right in the middle of the most exciting place on earth—the center of God's will for you! **SR**

Barry Babcock, son of the late Pastor (Lowell) Wayne and Ida Babcock, attends East Valley Bible Church in Gilbert, Ariz.

For the least of these brothers

As told to Pastor Scott Hausrath

“When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you? The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’” (Matthew 25:39-40, NIV).

There are approximately two and a quarter million men, women, and juveniles locked up in the United States. That’s more than any other nation in the world.

Some have only a few months to serve, others have 10 to 20 years left. Still others are never going to be physically free the rest of their lives.

When you think of people in prison, what’s your attitude toward them? That they deserve

to be there? That they’re all losers, and it’s a good thing they’re locked up, because it makes society safer?

What would Jesus’ attitude toward them be? When our Savior hung on the cross, he took a common thief to heaven with him.

I happen to be one of those 2,250,000 people locked up to protect society. I also praise God every day, because He chose me as an adopted son, and I will one day be in eternity with Him.

As it stands right now, I have five more years to serve on a 10-year sentence. So I’m excited to see Seventh Day Baptists showing an interest in prison ministry.

I would like to encourage your participation by sharing some of my experiences. Hopefully, they

will inform, encourage, and challenge you to actively seek a prison ministry.

+++

Several months ago, I saw an inmate watching TV. He was having a conversation with another inmate, and it went something like this:

“I’ve been locked up for 13 years and have been sitting in front of this TV for nine of them. I got seven years left to do. Some new guy thought he could change channels, and I had to explain how it works here.”

My curiosity got the best of me, so I said, “I couldn’t help overhearing your conversation. Could I ask you a question?”

“Sure,” he replied.

“How many visits have you had since you got here?”

He gave me an odd look and replied, “None.”

I couldn’t imagine what would cause *anyone* locked away in this environment never to receive a visit.

My unscientific poll

Not satisfied with this new information, I started compiling a survey. I wanted to ask other prisoners about their visits and decided to take an informal, unscientific poll at my job site the next day.

I asked 10 people the same question: “How many visits have you had since you got here?”

Seven prisoners said they had never been visited. One had been visited recently by his father, brother, and sister. Another was visited frequently by his wife and daughter. (He was also one of the few men not divorced by his wife since being incarcerated.) And family members living within 150 miles of the prison regularly visited another inmate.

Knowing you have a visitor

Basically, 70 percent of the prison-



ers I talked to had never been visited while in prison.

For me, it's always exciting when I know I have a visitor coming. That same excitement seems true for most prisoners.

You usually tell others that someone is going to visit you, and they share in your excitement. Those are days when you put on your fresh-pressed best clothes, then watch the parking lot to see if you can recognize a friend or family member.

Other days, you pace within your unit or job site, waiting for your name to be called on the P.A. system. It's such a relief when your name is finally called, because now you know they actually came to see you!

The visiting room

The visiting room is a place where a prisoner can let down his guard a little and relax. Visitation is so important that most rivals in the yard put aside their differences in the visiting area. It seems to be a safe zone.

It's always a blessing for me when someone visits. I know the sacrifice

“Here” or “Pass it,” and the guard passes the letter to you.

It's apparent that about 50 percent of the prisoners receive 90 percent of the mail. Some prisoners never even get up off their bunks at mail call, since they know they have no mail waiting for them. No birthday card, no Christmas card, no letter, nothing. It saddens me to think of the hundreds of thousands of men and women locked up and so forgotten.

Are they really that bad?

Perhaps prior to being locked up, they were such miserable people—so evil and mean—that no one wants anything to do with them now.

But is that God's opinion of them? Is their soul no longer of value to Him? Is that what Jesus had in mind when he said, “Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me”?

What can one person do?

I read about an elderly woman who could no longer get out of her

Music reaches

Are you an accomplished or aspiring musician? Would you like to perform for hundreds of men or women?

It's my experience that Christian concerts given within the walls of a prison are well-attended. Not only are they a blessing to your Christian brothers and sisters; they're also an opportunity to expose the unsaved to Jesus Christ.

Most prisons have full-time chaplains who are overworked and understaffed. Here in my prison, there are four or five chaplains trying to meet the needs of approximately 4,000 inmates.

I've seen concerts presented by singing groups from Prison Fellowship and the Billy Graham Crusades. Also, many small groups from local churches have come to present the Gospel. As a prisoner, I would return to the harsh confines of my cell with a renewed spirit.

Take that first step

Prison is a lonely place to spend years of your life. It takes very dedicated men and women to get involved in prison ministry; men and women who place their trust and faith in God, then step forward and say, “Here am I; send me.”

I encourage you to take the first step by contacting a group that's already operating prison ministry programs, and ask how you might become involved.

Or, call the local jail or prison and find out what volunteer opportunities they have, or what opportunities they would like to have. Take some time to make the difference for someone who has been abandoned by society, and show that person what it means to be Christ-like.

May God's blessing be with each of you! **SR**

Scott Hausrath pastors the Foothill Community Church (SDB) in Montrose, Calif. He regularly visits this inmate and asked him to share this story.

Some prisoners never even get up off their bunks at mail call, since they know they have no mail waiting for them. It saddens me to think of the hundreds of thousands of men and women locked up and so forgotten.

and effort they had to endure to come here. I also know that I'm not a forgotten person, like so many here. To have someone in person to pray with me—and for me—is like the credit card commercial: “Priceless.”

Mail call!

Another observation I've made relates to the daily 4:00 p.m. standing count. This is the time of day when the guard brings the mail.

The guard stands there and calls out the last name on the letter. The prisoner acknowledges by saying

house regularly. One day, her pastor came to visit and, as usual, she started complaining.

When the pastor asked her if she could still write, she replied, “Yes.” He then suggested that she start writing to prisoners across the United States.

This one woman was responsible for sharing the salvation message with hundreds of men and women in prison. Many men on death row in Florida received Christ as a result of her pen-pal program. You probably won't write to hundreds of prisoners, but what about two or three?



What I've learned in prison

by Matt Berg, SDB Chaplain, Leavenworth, Kan.

When I was in graduate school, I wrote a paper about helping inmates transition back into society after incarceration. As you might imagine, there are a myriad of societal and attitudinal barriers (both for the ex-offender and potential employer) that an individual faces upon re-entry.

I came away from that experience hoping that one day I would be able to put into practice some of the skills I learned from studying Vocational Rehabilitation.

After studying Chaplaincy in seminary, the Federal Bureau of Prisons hired me to be a chaplain at Leavenworth, Kan., the oldest federal prison in the country. My only prior prison experience was when I volunteered as a chaplain in a county jail while finishing seminary. (I hope this will encourage any of you who are considering prison ministry!)

From my six months on the job, I learned an important lesson: inmates aren't different from anyone else; they simply live in a different culture.

My wife likes to remind me of the importance of learning about other cultures, and I've enjoyed getting to know the culture inside Leavenworth.

In a way, we are all prisoners—trapped in our own cultural backgrounds, our families, our prejudices, and our fears. Learning to love the unlovable is an incredible opportunity to embrace Jesus' command to minister to those in prison. But most of us must first conquer our fear of the unknown.

When getting to know an inmate and the institution he lives in, be patient and look for the opportunities the Lord will give you to speak to people and listen

as they talk about their lives. Inmates are like most of us; they just want to be heard and respected. Many times, all that's required is a kind, listening ear.

These four directives, taken from Lenny Spitale's book, *Prison Ministry*, are necessary to effectively serve inmates:

- **Be yourself**

The old adage goes, "People don't care how much you know 'til they know how much you care."

When it comes to volunteers, inmates aren't looking for seminary-trained "Bible Superheroes." They simply want a person who cares enough to take time out of his/her busy life to invest in theirs.

The first inmate I spent time with while I was in seminary was overwhelmed by my inter-

est. I was the first visitor to see him in five years because his friends and family had abandoned him.

God made each of His followers wonderful creatures. Just be yourself, and you may be surprised how your own experiences speak to the lives of inmates.

One of my biggest fears coming into this job was, *How can I be relevant to an inmate's exper-*

been “around the block.” It’s always better to tell the inmate “no” or “maybe” than say “yes” and then find out that you were taken advantage of.

- **Love inmates and correctional officers with the love of Christ**

One of the realities I have learned from inmates is the importance of respect. “Respect”

Being helpful and supportive of other staff—particularly correctional officers—is vital if you want to keep all the doors of ministry open in a prison. If your fellow workers come to understand your role as primarily asking them for things and not caring for them as people, they’ll quickly dismiss you. You have absolutely no value to them as a chaplain.

A staff person died during my first six months at Leavenworth, and we held a memorial service for him. His family was overwhelmed by the support Chaplaincy gave them during this difficult time.

We visit staff members as well as inmates when they’re hospitalized. We do this on a regular basis as part of the ministry at Leavenworth. I also visited one staff member at home following a serious bicycle accident.

Sometimes it’s a “tricky” balance to maintain—serving both staff and inmates. But, thus far, the Lord has faithfully kept both doors open for ministry at Leavenworth.

You can encourage inmates simply by being open with your own life, showing how the Spirit has led and directed you through difficult times.

ience? I've never been incarcerated! I soon found out that being “real” with inmates is an immense act of grace, and a wonderful way to show these men and women the love of Christ.

- **Speak the truth with compassion**

Most of these prisoners grew up in families with little or no compassion. So when they see this trait in the life of a volunteer or chaplain, it can make a real impact for the Kingdom!

As Paul tells us in Ephesians 4:15, we are called to speak the truth in love. But there’s a fine line between being compassionate and leaving oneself open to manipulation.

Sometimes, we have to learn those lessons the hard way. If you ever suspect that you are being manipulated, talk about the issue with people who have

is a buzz-word in prison culture, and you have to earn it.

I try to treat everyone as a person made in God’s image, no matter how tarnished. Inmates usually embrace this kind of treatment because often times they don’t get it from the correctional officers they interact with every day.

A chaplain has the unique opportunity to minister to both staff and inmates. I had to learn it’s just as important to earn the respect of my fellow workers.

Everyone deserves dignity and respect. By letting inmates know that you have heard their requests and you are following through—assuring them that you will help if at all possible—is a “biggie” in prison ministry. Many inmates get “spun” by staff members who never honor their promises. Consequently, those employees lose credibility.

- **Live under the influence of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God**

Often times, you can encourage inmates simply by being open with your own life, showing how the Spirit has led and directed you through difficult times.

Each day, I pray that the Holy Spirit will open doors to help me make a difference in the lives of both inmates and staff. It’s amazing how the Spirit works in Bible studies—encouraging, challenging, and directing these inmates to “walk the walk” and not just “talk the talk” of Christianity! This is the biggest challenge for Christian inmates.

Prisoners must live out their Christianity in full view of unbelievers, and they must do it on a daily

basis. Every flaw is observed, and often these frailties are seized upon as evidence of apparent insincerity.

To keep this in perspective, just imagine yourself in the same situation. Could *you* withstand the intense scrutiny of neighbors and coworkers all day, every day, 365 days a year?

Committing to Christ in prison comes at a very high cost.

So, how do we minister to incarcerated individuals?

Teach them God's Way. Teach them not to lean on their own under-

standing, but in *all* their ways acknowledge Him. Let them *know* that He will direct their paths (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Teach them that He is a God who can be trusted. Teach them that no matter what happens in their lives, He is able to turn it to good for those who love Him. (Romans 8:28).

Teach them that God is big enough to work through the authorities in their lives—whether they are “out to lunch” or not. God is still able to bring good out of such circumstances.

Inmates aren't different from anyone else; they simply live in a different culture.

Teach them to love their enemies and to do them good. Teach them that prayer changes things, and to pray for those in authority over them (1 Timothy 2:2).

Be an instrument of righteousness in that place [prison], and you will find yourself being used by God to bring fulfillment to those who hunger and thirst for it (Matthew 5:6).

If we, as Christians, do not teach them these things, who will?

What now?

Maybe you are like me and have always had a heart for the marginalized. Volunteering in a prison ministry can be an immensely enriching experience, not to mention what it does for the inmates! I have seen the volunteers here at Leavenworth make an inmate's day, time and time again, simply by showing that they care.

Perhaps *you* should prayerfully consider going with a pastor into a prison near you. It will be a rich blessing, both for you and for the inmates. You may be surprised at how the Lord can use you to show the Love of Christ.

As a chaplain, I know how vital volunteerism is to the ministry we do here at Leavenworth. We are always looking for gifted and caring people who have a heart for sharing Christ's love in this unique environment. **SR**

A brief list of Prison Ministries



Someone Cares
Prison Ministry
PO Box 15338
Fort Wayne, IN 46885
260-492-7770
someonecares.org

Prison Fellowship
Ministries
44180 Riverside Pkwy
Lansdowne, VA 20176
800-251-7411
pfm.org

Focus on the Family
Colorado Springs,
CO 80995
800-232-6459
family.org

Mission & Evangelism
Pen Pal Ministries
260 S. Garey Ave.
Pomona, CA 91766

The Salvation Army National
Headquarters
615 Slaters Ln.
PO Box 269
Alexandria, VA 22313
703-684-5500
salvationarmyusa.org

Good News Jail & Prison
Ministry
PO Box 9760
Richmond, VA 23228-0760
804-553-4090
goodnewsjail.org

—Scott Hausrath

The 2008 Seventh Day Baptist Summer Christian Service Corps

*“Not to be served, but to serve.”
(Matthew 20:20-28)*

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(608) 868-2741; E-mail: scsc@miltonsdb.org
[PD = Project Director]

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Emily Watt

Milton, WI
Stephanie Sholtz, PD
Benny Uhlich
Ashley Henry
Gawane Bennett
Joshua Rankhorn

Seattle, WA
Melodie Noyes, PD
Katie Brown
Jackson Butler

2008 SCSC Training Staff:

•Pastor Steve Osborn
•Helen Goodrich

•Doreen Davis
•Andrew Camenga

•Shirley Morgan
•SCSC Comm. Members

•Vivian Looper
•Faith Green

This year's SCSC training will be held in Milton, Wis., June 18-26. Summer projects will run from June 26 to July 28.

Donations may still be sent to Enid Nobles, 9 Little Pond Trail, Ormond Beach FL 32174.

SCSC



2008 SCSC Committee:

Linda Lawton, *Chair*
Cheri Appel, Janet Butler
Marcy Kersten, Teresa Kersten

Wanted: Prayer Partners

We are looking for several prayer partners—women and men. Our young adults, Project Directors, training staff, and projects need to be lifted up in prayer. If you are interested in being a prayer partner this summer, please contact:

Faith Green
faithgreen@hotmail.com
9145 Hackberry Ave.
Plymouth, MI 48170
(734) 459-5684



Not just talkin' turkey

Does God play football?

Although I'm no sports fan, I found myself praying on Super Bowl Sunday that God would somehow glorify Himself during that game. (My only personal goal during the game was to get the ironing done!)

I'm so glad my full attention was on the TV during the last quarter when the quarterback—still on his feet—emerged from a pile of bodies and threw the football to his intended receiver. The receiver not only caught the “missile”; he clung to it with one hand as he was forced into an Olympic backbend by an opposition player.

It was then that I became convinced that God *must* play football! At the end of the game, God was glorified by the humble remarks of praise made by another player who, soon after that miraculous catch, scored the winning touchdown.

And what was my brother Ken's response to my enthusiastic interpretation of the events? “If the other team had won,” he commented, “someone on it would probably have praised the Lord, too!”

I can't prove by the Bible that God plays football, but I can show you proof that He exercises. Jeremiah 9:23-24 states, “...I am the

LORD which exercise...” (KJV).

The word “exercise” in this passage can mean accomplish, advance, appoint, become, bear, bestow, bring forth, (ready) dress, fashion, maintain, perform, practice, prepare, procure, provide, sacrifice, or trim. And these are only half of the definitions listed in my *Key Word Study Bible*.

I encourage you to read the whole context of these verses and substitute several of these definitions for “exercise.” I especially like knowing that God exercises or dresses lovingkindness just as one “dresses” a turkey for Thanksgiving dinner.

For those not acquainted with country living, let me explain what I learned when I married into a family of hunters and farmers.

It is still the custom for some to shoot their own turkey, to de-feather it or “dress” it. (Why that's not called “undressing” it I can't say!) Then the woman of the house trims the turkey. Which, strangely enough, means to “re-dress” or decorate it with parsley or a pretty side dish—like sweet potatoes.

Thanksgiving dinner always smells inviting, and the cold November air makes the warm kitchen just as inviting. Thus, the very words “dressed” and “trimmed” connote the warmth of this American holiday.

So, when I read that God “dresses” or “trims” lovingkindness, I see Him making preparations for it. Many of God's promises give us a future hope, a real comfort for any present pain or difficulty.

The words in Jeremiah 9 do the same.

We can be sure that God's loving-kindness reaches us even this very moment. Aren't you glad that you are His “intended” receiver and that no amount of pressure from the enemy can alter His plan? **SR**

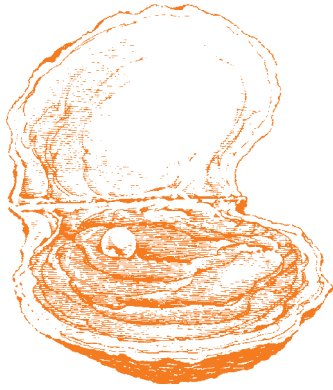
Reports from our Women's Societies

Three themes thread their way though the 2007 Women's Society reports: quilts, programs, and retreats. The strength of the “fabric” of these groups comes from their relationship with Jesus Christ and the resulting service to church and community. Here are a few of these services:

Hebron, Pa.—Heart pillows for breast cancer patients; Daytona Beach, Fla.—Shoe boxes for migrant workers' children; Plainfield, N.J.—Wednesday night meals for their Bible Study/Homeless Outreach program; White Cloud, Mich.—Support of Forgotten Men Ministries and Alpha Women's Center; and Berlin, N.Y., and Dodge Center, Minn.—Assisting needy families and sending college care packages.

There is a Bible verse about spurring one another on to love and good deeds. Thanks to all of you for doing exactly that!





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

How do you want your name listed?

Most of us are used to having our names listed alphabetically by our surnames. Our first and middle names are chosen for various reasons, but our last name identifies us within a family.

When a telephone directory is printed, it's alphabetized by family names rather than first names. But organizations or businesses are often listed by their first names.

For example, in Milton, Wis., there are two banks. The Bank of Milton is listed under "B," while the First Community Bank shows up under "F."

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Milton and St. Mary Catholic Church are listed side-by-side, as are the Seventh-day Adventist Consolidated School and the Seventh Day Baptist Church. Yet individuals are listed alphabetically by their last or "generic" names.

All this brings up a hypothetical question: Are we basically Sabbathkeepers who practice baptism by immersion? Or are we Baptists who keep the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath? From a strictly historical perspective, we were Baptists before we became Seventh Day Baptists.

In England, the first known writer in support of the seventh-day Sabbath was James Ockford. Others followed, including the Stennetts, who at times served both Baptist and Seventh Day Baptist churches.

In America, we credit Samuel and Tacy Hubbard as being the founders of Seventh Day Baptists in 1671. It was Tacy who first came to the conviction of baptism on confession of faith, and the couple was forced to move to Newport, R.I., where they joined the Baptist Church.

Even after they established the first SDB congregation in 1671, members of that church continued to be part of the Baptist family, exchanging pulpits and jointly supporting a Baptist chapel at Green End on the Bay.

Seventh Day Baptists were part of the founding of Rhode

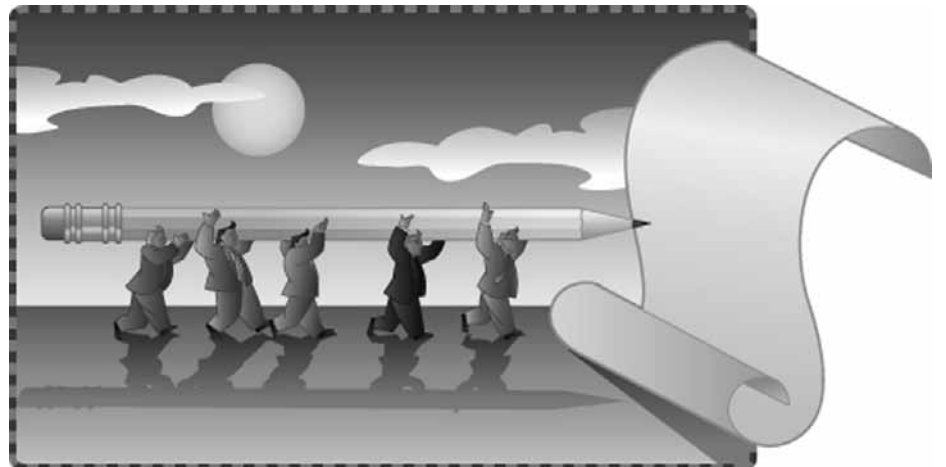
Island College, a school that later became Brown University in Providence.

So, perhaps we should at times think of the term "Baptist" as our generic or family part of the Christian Church, and the "Seventh Day" as our given first name.

We have been—and are—a part of the Baptist family. What if we were listed in the telephone book as though "Baptist" was our generic name and "Seventh Day" was our chosen name? At least we wouldn't be confused so often with Seventh-day Adventists!

I believe that we are fortunate to be considered a part of the Bap-

I am even more thankful for the personal name of "Seventh Day Baptist" bequeathed to me by my ancestral heritage.



tist family. In 1995, Broadman Press printed a book by Albert Wardin entitled, *Baptists Around the World: A Comprehensive Handbook*. It contained short sketches of most of our foreign missions and a more extensive section on our denomination in America.

We have represented Baptists in both national and international groups way beyond what our membership numbers would justify.

In 2006, Mercer Press published a book edited by Glenn Jonas entitled, *The Baptist River: Essays on Many Tributaries of a Diverse Tradition*. Chapter 10 of those tributaries was devoted to Seventh Day Baptists.

In 2001, the web site Baptist Heritage.com. was created. While I wasn't technically involved in its production, I was privileged to par-

**Are we
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Or are
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ticipate by providing some of the content. This included answering two frequently asked questions:

#7 "Why do Baptists immerse?"
That was easy to answer from a

Biblical perspective, and #17 "On what day do Baptists observe the Sabbath?" My answer to that question covered both the traditional worship on Sunday, with its rejection of Jewish legalism, and the celebration of the Resurrection.

But I also stated that there were some Baptists who, from about 1660 on, decided from their Bible study that the seventh day of the week—as commanded by God in the Ten Commandments, and the practice by Christ and the New Testament Church—is still valid and ought to be observed.

I'm thankful for our Baptist heritage and for being a part of the Baptist family, which I consider my larger family. But I am even more thankful for the personal name of "Seventh Day Baptist" bequeathed to me by my ancestral heritage. **SR**

Denominational Dateline

April 2008

- 1-4 Missouri fellowships—Ron Elston
- 6 Lewis Camp meeting, Berlin, N.Y.—Kirk Looper
- 11-13 Atlanta and Stone Mountain, Ga.—Elston
- 19 New York City SDB Church—Conference President Andy Samuels
- 19 Pataskala, Ohio—Gordon Lawton
- 19-20 SDB Memorial Board Quarterly Meeting, Salem, W.Va.—Morgan Shepard, Rob Appel, Lawton
- 20 Board of CE Directors Meeting, Alfred Station, N.Y.—Andrew Camenga, Looper
- 20 Christian Social Action Comm., Salem—Appel
- 23 Plainfield, N.J.—Samuels
- 24 Millersville (Pa.) University—Appel
- 26-27 Missionary Society Quarterly Meeting, Ashaway, R.I.—Kirk Looper, Elston, Camenga
- 28 World Federation Executive Meeting, Ashaway—Looper

May

- 3-5 Allegheny Association, Toronto, Canada—Samuels, Appel
- 10-11 SDB Historical Society Directors and Annual Meeting, SDB Center—Nick Kersten, Appel
- 16-18 Eastern Assoc., Ashaway—Samuels, Looper

- 16-25 California churches and pastors—Lawton
- 17 Sabbath Renewal Day
- 17 Old Stonefort, Ill.—Elston, Appel
- 18 MOST (Teacher Training), Marlboro, N.J.—Camenga
- 22-24 Baptist History and Heritage Annual Meeting, Atlanta, Ga.—Kersten
- 24 SouthEast Atlanta (Ga.) church—Appel
- 27-28 Pastors' "Canopy" meeting, Verona, N.Y.—Appel, Camenga, Looper, Kevin Butler
- 30-6/9 Lincoln/Omaha, Neb.—Looper
- 31 175th Anniversary, Hebron, Pa.—Kersten
- 31 Battle Creek, Mich.—Samuels

June

- 2-13 Summer Institute, Janesville—Lawton
- 6-8 Central NY Association, Verona—Samuels, Appel
- 13-15 Southwest Association, Little Rock, Ark.—Samuels, Appel, Elston
- 17-26 SCSC Training, Milton, Wis.—Camenga
- 20-21 Ordination Council, Daytona Beach, Fla.—Lawton
- 27-29 Appalachian Association, Lost Creek, W.Va.—Samuels, Appel



Many helps in *Helping Hand*

If you haven't looked at a *Helping Hand* lately, you've missed some important changes made to the magazine in recent years. Each lesson now has seven sections that help prepare you to participate in serious Bible study for a Sabbath School class or other small group.

Daily Bible Meditations

The first section in each lesson contains the *Daily Bible Meditations*. While daily interaction with the Bible is important, just choosing what to read can be an obstacle.

The *Daily Bible Meditations* remove this obstacle by providing passages of Scripture that are short enough to read relatively quickly and still cover the primary and background Scriptures for each week's lesson. The Scripture is paired with a paragraph or two that encourages you to think, ponder, or meditate on the meaning of the text for life.

Heart of the Lesson

God intends for Scripture to change us and to challenge the incorrect ways we look at the world. The *Heart of the Lesson* captures the essence of a lesson in two sentences and a question.

An observation about humanity is followed by a question about that observation. We try to tie observation, question, and Scripture together in a faithful manner.

While your class may choose to take another lesson from the text, the *Heart of the Lesson* almost always provides a challenge from Scripture.

Key Verse

The *key verse* is chosen to represent the lesson focus. You may choose to memorize the verse.

Questions for Studying the Text

We write these questions to help you think about the text during the week. They try to cover the range of learning represented by the cognitive domain of *Bloom's Taxonomy*.

Some questions will have straightforward, one- and two-word answers. Others will require significant knowledge of the whole Bible.

Still other questions will look to apply the text to your daily walk. Some of the questions may not even have an answer.

Understanding and Living

Explaining the context, historical background, and focus of the text is one purpose of this section. Another is to encourage you

to apply the Scripture to your life right now.

Hints for Teaching the Class

We provide lesson aims that touch on facts you should know, ideas you should understand, and behaviors or feelings that may result from the lesson. From time to time, we also provide teachers with interesting, quirky, and helpful methods for approaching the lesson material.

This section does not describe how to teach the class; however, we hope that it will provide thought-starters for teachers.

Looking Forward/ Looking Back

Each lesson is connected with others during a quarter. This short summary helps you connect with what is coming in the next lesson or remember all the lessons in a unit. **SR**

Large Print *Helping Hand* available again on CD-ROM

The Helping Hand in Bible Study is available in a large-print format for churches in the United States and Canada that subscribe to the regular edition of the *Helping Hand*. The large-print edition is available as a PDF and is distributed on a CD. It's formatted for letter-sized sheets of paper, and maintains both the layout and page numbering of the print edition.

For more information, contact the Board of Christian Education office.



FOCUS on Missions

Good news in Tanzania

by Kirk Looper

We have received word that the ministry of SDBs in Tanzania, Africa, is going well, thanks to the efforts of General Secretary Robango Ryakitimbo.

This Conference has been working in earnest for the past year, and it has brought dynamic growth. Here are some excerpts from Pastor Ryakitimbo's report:

"The Tanzania Conference has a reason to praise the Lord for its soul-winning efforts which brought forth 21 new believers into the family of God. Opportunities in the 'cause of Christ' involved sowing the seed of the Word of God in every opportunity that came along once the Conference received Christian materials from the Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society. Doors were open to go forth into places we did not expect.

"The Seventh Day Baptist churches in Tanzania now operate with 29 congregations located in 10 regions.

"The mathematical principle of distance says, 'The shortest distance between two points is a straight line.' If one travels from Dar es Salaam across Tanzania to Mara Region, he covers over 1,000 kilometers by road. This shows the need for a vehicle to meet people in various churches

to foster unity in the Conference.

"As the Conference grows, we desire assistance to cope with more affiliation requests, which are still forthcoming.

"This Conference appreciates the number of challenges before it, presenting opportunities for these brave men and women to minister under the Seventh Day Baptist Church in Tanzania. As people of the Lord's covenant, they will lead their congregations to climb Jacob's ladder as Soldiers of the Cross amid:

- A serious economic inflation pounding the country;
- Exorbitant prices of essential commodities;
- A low income capacity of these churches as they exercise a congregational system."

It's important to note that the attitude of the people in Tanzania has changed considerably over the past five years. Turmoil, tensions, strife, and deaths in neighboring countries have helped Tanzanians realize that they need God more than ever.

It's encouraging to see Christian tracts on the desks of secretaries and administrators. SDB pastors in Tanzania visit public and private

offices frequently, extending invitations to come to know the Lord. They are honoring Jesus' command to "Go ye into all the world and make disciples" (Matthew 28:19).

Tanzania is open enough that SDBs can enter a company or store and ask to meet with employees during their lunch hour. They hold these meetings in the United Nations' facility as well as in other businesses.

After getting permission from the person in charge, a handful of SDBs will meet with workers during lunch to talk.

Employees from Kenya were concerned about the worsening situation in their country. Some told of losing relatives, friends, and property. Just a simple statement, such as "God is in control," encouraged them greatly.

These meetings give Tanzanian SDBs a chance to work with people in a cross-cultural environment. Although the employees speak in different tongues and live under various belief systems, they are very open to the Gospel and the dedication required for salvation.

Holding services in prisons is another ministry church leaders have assumed.

They travel 11 miles to Arusha Central Prison, where they distribute Bibles and counsel inmates. Their efforts have been fruitful, and that ministry has surged ahead.

We pray that they will be successful in their outreach to prisoners, some of whom are facing execution. We also pray that those accepting Christ as their Savior will be able to clarify their goals and please God in the process. **SR**



Members of the Arusha SDB congregation in Tanzania.



the BEACON

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

April 2008

Live up to your bumper stickers

by Micayla Neher, Dodge Center, Minn.

“Punchline” is a daily joke column in our newspaper, and Dad enjoys reading it to us. One day at the dinner table, he repeated this joke he had read:

A man was being tailgated by a stressed-out woman on a busy boulevard. When the light turned yellow just in front of him, he stopped at the crosswalk, even though he could have beaten the red light by accelerating through the intersection.

The tailgating woman was furious. Dropping her cell phone and makeup, she honked her horn and screamed in frustration because she missed her chance to get through the intersection.

Still in mid-rant, she heard a tap on her car’s window. Looking up, she saw the face of a serious-looking police officer.

After ordering her to exit her car, the officer took her to the police station where she was searched, fingerprinted, photographed, and placed in a holding cell.

After a couple of hours, the policeman approached her cell and opened the door.

“I’m sorry for this mistake,” he said. “When I pulled up behind your car, you were blowing your horn, ‘flipping off’ the guy in front of you, and cussing a blue streak at him.

“Then I noticed your ‘What Would Jesus Do?’ bumper sticker, the ‘Choose Life’ license-plate holder, the ‘Follow Me to Sunday School’ sticker, and the chrome-plated Christian fish emblem on your car’s trunk. Naturally, I assumed you had stolen the vehicle.”

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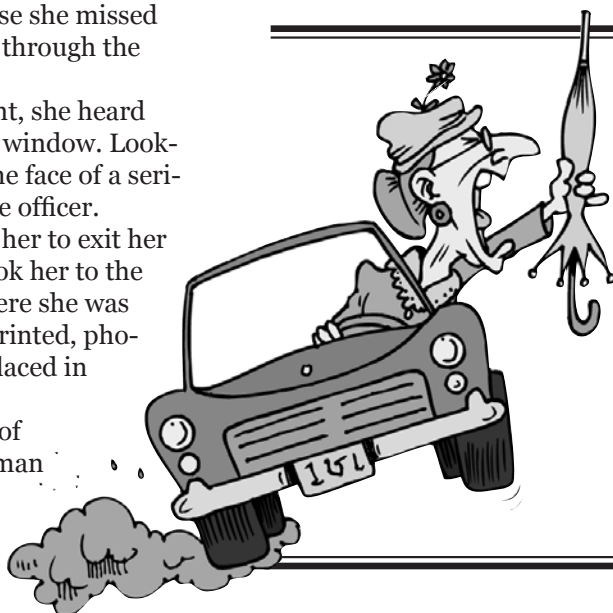
How many of us can tell a similar story—either about someone

we know or even ourselves?

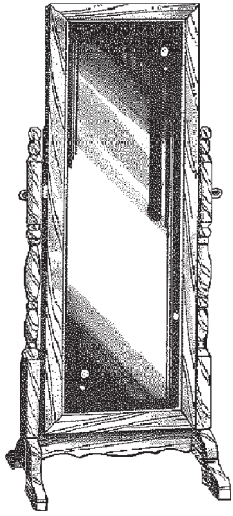
Whenever I ask someone why they don’t go to church, the number one answer is, “I don’t like to go because I feel that the church is full of hypocrites.”

My heart breaks a little bit more every time I hear someone say that. It upsets me because I know that answer is sometimes true.

No one is perfect, so each of us is bound to “slip up” at times. But let’s do our best to be positive witnesses for Christ! *SR*



A man was being tailgated by a stressed-out woman. When the light turned yellow, he stopped at the crosswalk, even though he could have beaten the red light. The woman was furious. She honked her horn and screamed in frustration.



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

“Breakin’ outta da joint”

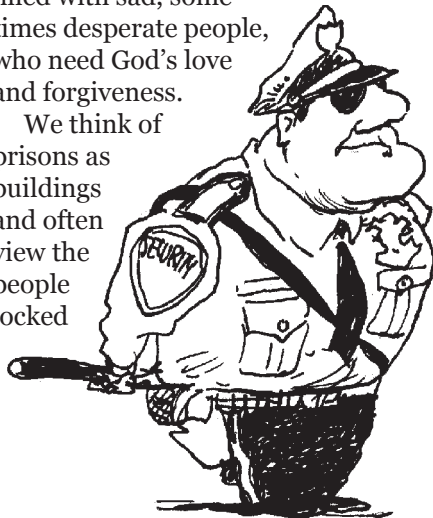
When someone mentions the word “prison,” we tend to conjure up similar images.

Years ago, we may have pictured scenes from a Jimmy Cagney black and white gangster film: small, bleak cells with iron bars on the windows; men dressed in black-and-white-striped prison garb; jailers with sneers on their faces and billy clubs in their hands.

Today, we think in Technicolor: small, pristine cells with stainless steel sinks and comfortable bunk beds; men and women decked out in orange jumpsuits; uniformed guards with polished shoes on their feet and mace in their belts.

Regardless of how we view prisons, a common thread weaves through the tattered lives of inmates. State prisons, county jails, and juvenile detention facilities are filled with sad, sometimes desperate people, who need God’s love and forgiveness.

We think of prisons as buildings and often view the people locked



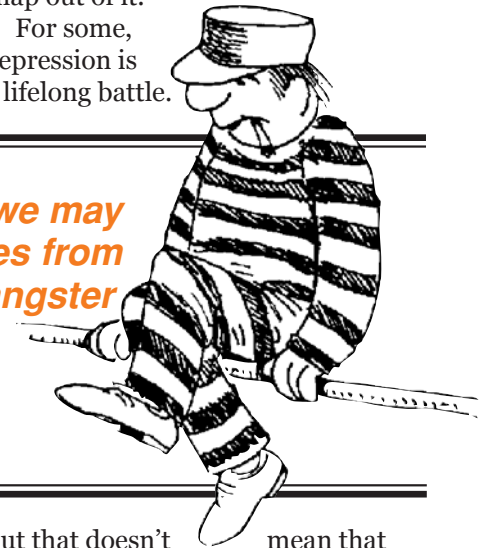
up in them as individuals deserving of punishment. But there are different kinds of “prisons” and different kinds of “inmates.”

Through no fault of their own, some people are locked into bad marriages or tumultuous relationships that they can’t “fix.” Others make poor choices and end up “imprisoned” by drugs or alcohol. Still others lock themselves in

their own little world—a deep, dark valley where joy seems a distant, dusty memory. This isolation can be self-imposed, but it can also happen when well-meaning but ignorant people shun the depressed person. An oft-heard piece of advice is, “Just snap out of it.”

For some, depression is a lifelong battle.

Years ago, we may have pictured scenes from a Jimmy Cagney gangster film, where men were dressed in black-and-white-striped prison garb.



their rooms where they’re held hostage by computer-generated pornography.

People can also be captured and caged by greediness and self-indulgence. This can lead to bitterness, loneliness, isolation, and even alienation.

Mental illness can also imprison people. Sometimes even warm, loving homes can be turned into jails when individuals suffer from agoraphobia—an abnormal fear of being in open or public places. In extreme cases, victims can be house-bound for years.

Depression and anxiety can lead to a form of incarceration, confining and limiting even the most outgoing person.

Speaking from experience, depressed individuals can end up in

But that doesn’t mean that their days will always be filled with failed dreams, empty hopes, and despairing tears. The grace of God—along with competent counseling and modern medications—can restore rational thought, eventually breaking the invisible chains that bind the mind and heart, and shackle the soul.

At death, lives and minds will be healed. Our transformed bodies—our new “tents” in heaven’s campground—will be perfect and eternal. There will be no dark valleys, no joyless days. Chains will be broken and isolating barriers will be destroyed forever.

God alone holds the key to unlock our lives. When He does, we can live in true freedom here on earth until Christ comes again. Hallelujah! **SR**



A LIMITLESS GOD FOR A HUNGRY PEOPLE

2008 SDB General Conference August 3-9
Carthage College, Kenosha, Wisconsin



The President's Page
by Pastor Andrew Samuels

The kindest people on earth

In 1997, I read *Conspiracy of Kindness* by Steve Sjogren. The book's subtitle is, "A Refreshing New Approach to Sharing the Love of Jesus with Others."

I was literally captivated by the concepts articulated in that book, and I remained riveted to it until the very last "jot and tittle." The author had no trouble convincing me of the power of kindness, and I was immediately sold on the idea of Servant Evangelism.

You see, the people in my churches have heard me say many times that Christians ought to be the nicest people on earth. They should be the kindest people on earth. They should be the most loving people on earth. We can apply this to every aspect of the Fruit of the Spirit.

Sjogren (pronounced "show-grin") defines Servant Evangelism as, "Demonstrating the kindness of God by offering to do some act of humble service with no strings attached."

Is there a Christian alive who *can't* engage in that type of evangelism? The possibilities and the opportunities are limitless! I want Servant Evangelism to be my lifestyle; I want it to be second nature to me.

I do agree with the idea expressed in the book that deeds of love, followed by words of love and adequate time, are what give people

the best chance of knowing Jesus.

So, I have challenged all the ministry departments in the Miami, Fla., SDB Church to engage in at least one Servant Evangelism Project each quarter in 2008.

So far, our Women's Fellowship has ministered to people by giving away free bottles of water and other drinks to thirsty motorists at a busy intersection just one block from our church. They not only shared the love of Jesus, but they had fun doing it!

Recently, our youths were "moved" visibly and audibly when they helped give plates of food and care packages to homeless people in downtown Miami. When the team ran out of food long before they ran out of "customers," our young people dug into their pockets and came up with whatever money they could. With a grand total of \$52, they bought 52 hamburgers at a fast-food restaurant and gave them to the hungry people who were still lined up seeking a bite to eat.

That experience was so fulfilling for our youngsters that they begged us to do that ministry again, perhaps on a regular basis. It's heartwarming to see young people who are eager to serve those in need, in the name of Jesus.

On the same day, one of our teams visited a laundromat and

gave away quarters as people did their wash.

We've also given away copies of the *Miami Herald* to motorists at the intersection near us. One man asked, "Why are you 'selling it' for free?" With every gift, we leave a card with our church's information on it.

On a recent Sabbath, I invited church members who drive through a toll booth, to pay the toll for the car behind them. The last time I did that, the recipient furiously drove down the Florida turnpike just so he could have a good look at this "weirdo." The gentleman then gave me a thumbs up for my act of kindness.

What would happen if our churches consistently engaged in Servant Evangelism as part of their outreach efforts? I believe it would make a tremendous difference in our ministries.

Once you set out to do this, prepare yourself for the results—the harvest. God will bring people your way.

For me, I want our church to have a presence in our community, so that everyone will know us as "the kind people."

At this year's General Conference, Steve Sjogren will share with us about how to be better "outflow" people. It's going to be a treat! Let's keep pointing hungry people to our limitless God! **SR**



by Executive Director
Rob Appel

What is the SDB plan? (Part Two)

Last month, I asked if we had a plan to fulfill the Great Commission in our churches and Conference. I have been working on a three-year Ministry Alliance Plan—or M.A.P.—for us to use as a template as we press forward to take the next step in our local ministries.

I also shared a possible Strategic Vision, and I want to add part two to this proposition. These are the Strategic Objectives that we would agree on. Then the Key Action Plans are to ensure that we would not allow things to “slip through the cracks.”

Strategic Objectives are those few, critical goals which must be accomplished to “become what you want to be,” i.e., achieve your Strategic Vision.

There should be no more than three to five Strategic Objectives. Each must be measurable, so you will know when the goal has been achieved.

Key Action Plans are those projects or actions you plan to take to achieve your Strategic Objectives. Each action plan must link to a specific Strategic Objective.

Here’s how this would look:

–Strategic Objective

Increase current number of churches in urban areas by 50 percent within the next three years.

–Action Plan

Who: General Council & CLT

Implement a proactive and comprehensive marketing plan to plant and promote churches in strategic locations.

–Strategic Objective

Reduce antiquated program for new ministry programs that fit our Strategic Vision.

–Action Plan

Who: All Boards

Identify the stagnant programs and look to implement dynamic ministries going forward.

–Strategic Objective

Increase children’s ministries and opportunities for participation in these programs Conference wide.

–Action Plan

Who: BCE

Develop education and involvement ministries designed for elementary-aged children.

–Strategic Objective

Begin to utilize our 18- to 35-year-old members in the work of the denomination as follows:

First Year — 1 or 2

Year Two — Another 2 or 3

Year Three — Another 2 or 3

–Action Plan

Who: General Council

Look at areas where we can plug the younger adults into the standing Boards and Committees of the General Conference.

–Strategic Objective

Participate in the development of a college-age ministry. Make recommendations to General Council within the next 12 months.

–Action Plan

Who: All SDBs

Identify the “disconnect” that many of our college-age people feel with their home church and the Conference.

This is only a small part of the Ministry Alliance Plan that I’m currently working on. Please understand that it is still a “work in progress.” If you have comments or suggestions, I would appreciate hearing from you.

As the noted genius Red Green once said, “Remember, I’m pulling for ya. We’re all in this together!” **SR**



Medical mission needs your help

by Morgan Shepard

“The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me’” (Matthew 25:40, NIV).

In 2006, Perry and Amanda Barbee from the German SDB Church in Salemville, Pa., along with Dr. Ron Davis, began leading an annual medical mission trip to help the needy who live outside the United States. They traveled to Jamaica in 2006, and visited Guyana last year.

Both trips were successful in providing medical care and in spreading Christ’s love and his call to help others.

This coming June, a medical team will once again visit Guyana, providing much needed medical assistance to communities that are served by the Guyanese SDB churches.

The team will again focus on providing wellness checks and medical assistance. They will also supply reading glasses, medicines, and Bibles to anyone who needs them. Another mission team from the Milton, Wis., SDB Church will join them. The Milton group will work on a new dormitory for Camp Glory and provide pastoral training to the Guyanese pastors.

These short-term missions contribute short and long-term benefits. Immediate medical needs are met by a medical professional. People with more extensive needs are identified, and the team then arranges for further medical care (i.e. surgery, etc).

Clothes, sandals, and supplies are given to children who have none of these items. Bibles and tracts are also provided as part of an evangelism outreach for the churches. Last year’s team was interviewed for a Guyana TV program, giving more exposure to the Guyanese Seventh Day Baptist Church. Simply caring for others can make a difference for Christ.

How can you participate? Even if you can’t go with these teams, you can still be a vital part. First, pray for

open hearts and a successful and safe trip. Second, consider giving toward the needs of the mission. The chart below outlines some of the costs:

Medical Mission

Team Needs	Costs
Medicine and Supplies	\$1,500.00
Reading Glasses.....	250.00
(150 pairs +)	
Expenses in Guyana	1,500.00
(Food, Travel, Lodging)	
Bibles	250.00
(\$5.99 = 100 Bibles!)	
Travel	9,000.00
(From New York to Guyana)	
TOTAL:	\$12,500.00

Team members are responsible for their own air-fare from their home to New York’s JFK Airport. Construction supplies—cement, lumber, etc.—are needed to build the Camp Glory dormitory. Materials for the pastoral training are still being developed.

Donations for these items will be taken down to Guyana. As you can see, numerous areas can use your help. In addition to your donations, the SDB Memorial Fund has provided a grant to help offset costs.

Want to be a part? Donations can be sent to: SDB Memorial Board, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547. Please indicate “Medical Missions” on your gift.

Become involved and do some thing for all of our brothers and sisters in the world, not just “the least of these.” **SR**

Yes, you can make a difference!



Updates from Upstate (N.Y.)

The Leonardsville-Brookfield, N.Y., SDB Church has been enjoying new life and celebrating special milestones.

Pastor Gene Smith has served the church for one year, but is now looking to re-enter his retirement. New members were recently welcomed (*see page 24*).


Vaughn and Sharon Ferguson were blessed with the weddings of two of their children, Jeremy Ferguson to Diana Henry, and Stacy Ferguson to Paul Cheseboro. The Ferguson clan also grew with three new grandchildren.

Daryl and Jodi Hawes were happy to have both of their sons home together for the first time in two years. (Both are serving in the U.S. Army.) A welcome-home dinner was held at the Brookfield Parish House, and many friends came out to see them.

Recent visits by SDB executives taught the church more about denominational ministries. Andrew Camenga, Executive Director of the SDB Board of Christian Education, came in December. Editor Kevin Butler shared information about the American Sabbath Tract

and Communication Council in March.

The church gives a special thank-you to all those who have been praying for Lowell Welch. He continues to make a miraculous recovery from his major heart attack last year. Please keep Lowell and Pat in your prayers. They are sure that God pulled him through!

Church members also gathered at the Parish House to help celebrate Robert Langworthy's 90th birthday. He is the church's senior deacon. 

General Conference Carthage College, Kenosha, Wis. August 3-9, 2008



Housing

There are a limited number of "triple occupancy" dorm rooms available. Only 28 dorm rooms in South Hall will allow one child (age 11 and under) to sleep on the floor without charge.

These rooms will only be available through the on-line registration while they last. Please register early!

Thinking about Camping at Conference? Check out these campsites:

Happy Acres Kampground
www.happyacres.com

Richard Bong State Recreation Area
www.bongnaturalistassociation.org



Want to learn more about **What to Do** in Kenosha?
Check out the area Chamber of Commerce:
www.kenoshaareachamber.com

Or to check out all of Kenosha County:
www.explorewisconsin.com/countypages/kenosha.html

Or save some time and keystrokes
and just go to our website to find these links and more:
www.seventhdaybaptist.org

Births

Oliver.—A daughter, Genevieve Oliver, was born to Mike and Shontel (Gaff) Oliver of Brookfield, NY, on December 26, 2006.

Roache.—A son, Jaden Joseph Roache, was born to Robert and Debbie Roache of Warwick, RI, on March 1, 2008.

Death Notices

Kenneth B. Ochs, 93, of Milton, Wis., died on February 18, 2008.

Margaret (Skaggs) Bond, 92, of Shiloh, N.J., died on March 12, 2008.

Robert E. Gordon Sr., 76, of Rockville, R.I., died on March 17, 2008.

New members

Grand Rapids, MI
Joined by letter
Jenna Wethington
Joined after testimony
Cindy Myhalyk

Houston, TX
Jim Barclift, pastor
Joined after testimony
Maguel Leiva
Adriana Leiva
Abigail Rico
Jose V. Rios
Ruby Suarez

Leonardsville-Brookfield, NY
Gene Smith, pastor
Joined after testimony
Gene Hoose
Celeste Hoose
Patrick Hoose

Metro Atlanta, GA
John Pethtel, pastor
Joined after testimony
Ralph Harris
Yolanda Harris
Charles Harris
Steve Harris

Milton, WI
George Calhoun, pastor
Joined by letter
Nathan Crandall
Michelle Crandall
Joined after baptism
Shirley Parsons
Joined after testimony
Steve Gincer
Spencer Mattox

West Palm Beach, FL
Alcott Lynch, pastor
Joined after baptism
Gabriel Appow
Raeshaun Coonce
Bianca Mossiah
Joined after testimony
Bridgett Appow
Millicent Rhooms

2008 SDB General Conference Operating Budget

Board / Agency	Monthly Operating Budget	Monthly Giving Towards Budget	Received Feb '08	Over / (Short)
General Services*	\$ 22,635.13	\$ 16,513.25	\$ 9,417.93	\$ (7,095.32)
Council On Ministry	13,017.33	5,410.25	2,795.93	(2,614.32)
Missionary Soc.	25,083.33	4,879.83	2,626.25	(2,253.58)
Tract Council	12,142.17	4,750.00	2,162.50	(2,587.50)
Christian Edu.	9,676.67	4,470.33	2,701.02	(1,769.31)
Women's Soc.	3,116.67	2,475.00	148.33	(2,326.67)
Total	\$ 85,671.30	\$ 38,498.67	\$ 19,851.96	\$(18,646.71)

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

Budget Overage / Shortfall Year to Date	(\$25,043.23)
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Morgan Shepard
Treasurer, SDB General Conference

Check our website and read the SDBlog

The "SDB Exec" web log (known internally as 'SDBlog') features posts from our agency executives. Check it out at

seventhdaybaptist.org

Obituaries

Rienks.—Betty Ann Rienks, 63, of North Loup, Neb., died on January 24, 2008, at the Good Samaritan Hospital in Kearney, Neb.

She was born on May 28, 1944, in North Loup, the daughter of Nels and Ersel (Goodrich) Jorgensen. She graduated from North Loup-Scotia High School in 1962. She worked for the Grand Island, Neb., Ordinance Plant and also the Ord Quiz. She married Ted Leggett, and they had one son, Shawn.

On July 22, 1978, Betty married Charles Rienks and worked for him in his electrical business. The couple eventually moved to Seattle, Wash., where Betty worked in a hospital as an inventory control clerk.

In 1983, Betty and Charles settled in Edwardsburg, Mich., and she took a job at Uniroyal in Mishawaka, Ind. They retired in 2000 and moved back to North Loup. She then worked part-time at North Loup Valley Bank and at the Valley County treasurer's office in Ord.

Betty was a member of the North Loup American Legion Auxiliary, serving as president until her health declined. She was also a member of the Red Hat Society, the Professional Women's Card Club, and the North Loup Seventh Day Baptist Church, teaching Sabbath School and helping numerous Bible study groups.

She enjoyed entertaining during North Loup's Popcorn Days, and loved having friends and family members in her home. She was an involved grandmother, but her top priority was taking care of her mother.

Survivors include her husband, Charles, of North Loup; her mother, Ersel Jorgensen of North Loup; two sons, Shawn Leggett of North Loup and Dr. Douglas Rienks of Lincoln, Neb.; two daughters, Melanie Olson of Broken Bow, Neb., and Charlene Smith of Burns, Wyo.; one sister, Norma Mason of Phillips, Neb.;

two brothers, Larry of Ewing, Neb., and Cliff of Alma, Neb.; and 10 grandchildren.

Funeral services were held on January 29, 2008, at the North Loup SDB Church, with Rev. Christian Mattison officiating. Burial was in the Hillside Cemetery, North Loup.

Preston.—Mattie Sue (Tipton)

Preston, 78, passed to her rest on January 27, 2008, at her home in New Market, Ala.

She was born on September 23, 1929, in Madison County, Ala., the daughter of Essie and Ollie Tipton.

Mattie married Horace Preston. Together, they discovered the Sabbath truth and joined the Paint Rock, Ala., SDB Church some 18 years ago. They remained faithful members and were loved by all.

Survivors include one brother, James, and several nieces and nephews. Her husband, Horace, preceded her in death.

Funeral services were held on January 29, 2008, at the Spry Funeral Home in Huntsville, Ala. Her pastor, Rev. John Bevis, and Rev. Larry Johnson officiated. Burial was in Nelson's Chapel Cemetery.

Bond.—Claston "Classy" Bond, 85, died peacefully on February 3, 2008, at Golden Living Center in Franklin, Minn. He had lived there the last three months.

Claston was born on April 7, 1922, in Dodge County, Minn., the son of Henry and Cora (Ellis) Bond. He graduated from Dodge Center High School as class salutatorian.

Following graduation, he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps and served more than four years in the Pacific Theatre as a flight engineer on a DC-3 aircraft. After the war, he was honorably discharged as a staff sergeant. He then joined his father in running the family dairy farm in rural Dodge County.

Classy began dating his sweetheart, Seili Jalkanen, after sweeping her off her feet at a local roller skating rink. The couple married in September of 1948.

Claston worked at the Owatonna Tool Company for nearly 12 years, and then was a steel worker and truck delivery driver for McNeilus Steel Company in Dodge Center for about 20 years.

Claston and Seili were lifelong, active members of the Dodge Center Seventh Day Baptist Church.

A farmer at heart, Classy loved the Southern Minnesota farm country and enjoyed life in his small, rural hometown.

He was a proud Marine, a hard worker, and an ardent Sabbath-keeper. He had a "life of the party" personality, entertaining friends and strangers alike.

Classy's bipolar mental illness created challenges for him, but his family and employers adapted and loved him through the best and worst of times.

Above all else, poetry defined the real, inner man for everyone who knew and appreciated this gifted truck driver. Classy's lyrical poetry portrayed his deeply spiritual character and his penchant for delighting the subject of his poems—usually family and friends. Some of his poetry was even published nationally.

Survivors include one son, Bill, of Forest Lake, Minn.; three daughters, Bette of Los Angeles, Calif., Faye Wendland of Byron, Minn., and Mary Proctor of Mesquite, Tex; seven grandchildren, and one great-granddaughter. In addition to his loving wife of 51 years, he was preceded in death by four brothers—Ormand, Lawrence, Arthur, and Wesley; and three sisters—Leona Bushaw, Ardith Greene, and Bernice Jensen.

Funeral services were held on February 6, 2008, at the Dodge Center SDB Church, with Pastor Dale

E. Rood officiating. Burial was in Dodge Center's Riverside Cemetery.

Babcock.—Ida May Babcock, 84, died on February 10, 2008, at Pine Haven Nursing Home in Pine Island, Minn., where she resided for two weeks.

Born on April 17, 1923, in Hays, Kan., she was one of 10 children born to Clarence and Martha (Jacky) Babcock. She spent most of her childhood in North Loup, Neb., graduating from that town's high school in 1940. On March 3, 1945, she married Lowell Wayne Babcock in Chicago, where he was serving in the Navy.

The couple lived in California, Arkansas, Iowa, Louisiana, Missouri, and Nebraska. When Wayne became a pastor in 1966, they moved to Dodge Center, where they served the local Seventh Day Baptist church for four years. They later ministered at SDB churches in Verona, N.Y.; Centralia, Wash.; and Richburg, N.Y.

Ida was a helpmate, mother, and diligent worker in the churches, as well as in some secretarial positions. While in Dodge Center, she worked in the Farm Bureau Insurance office for several years.

After Wayne's retirement, they lived in Daytona Beach, Fla., before returning "home" to Dodge Center.

Ida spent many hours volunteering in the senior dining room at Heritage Estates in Dodge Center, where she lived until last August. She also volunteered at her church and local schools.

Survivors include three sons, Pastor Robert Babcock of Bridgeton, N.J., William of West Concord, Minn., and Barry of Mesa, Ariz.; three brothers, Gilbert of Ord, Neb., Iradell of North Loup, and Donald of Hickman, Neb.; two sisters, Marguerite Scott of Ord and Bonnie Severance of North Loup; eight grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews. In addition to her husband, she was predeceased by one daughter, Martha Biehle; one sister, Lillian Barber; three brothers, Merwin, Chester, and Carroll; and one great-grandson.

A memorial service was held on February 23, 2008, at the Dodge Center SDB Church, with Pastor Dale E. Rood officiating. Burial was in Dodge Center's Riverside Cemetery.

Dickinson.—Melvin R. Dickinson Sr., 85, of Stow Creek Township, N.J., died at home on February 16, 2008, after an extended illness.

The husband of Matilda "Tillie" (Harris) Dickinson, he was born in Stow Creek Township on April 27, 1922, the son of Clarence D. and Alice (Randolph) Dickinson. He was a lifelong resident of Stow Creek.

Melvin graduated from Bridgeton, N.J., High School in 1940 and, using his talents in agriculture, began managing the family farm. He continued farming in Stow Creek and was president of M.R. Dickinson and Son farm until his retirement.

Throughout his career, Melvin received several awards, including a trip to Phoenix, Ariz., in 1958. In 1990, the Dickinson family received the Century Award for four generations of farming. He was a member of the New Jersey Farm Bureau.

Melvin was a longtime member of the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Shiloh, N.J., where he had served as church treasurer, trustee, and Sabbath School teacher.

He also served on the Stow Creek Township Board of Education for over 20 years and was actively involved in township activities. He enjoyed hunting, bowling, and family and farm related vacations.

In addition to his wife of 61 years, survivors include a son, Melvin Randolph "Randy" Dickinson Jr., and a daughter, Barbara Andrews, both of Stow Creek; six grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by one brother, Rev. C. Harmon Dickinson; and two sisters, Jeanett Nida and Eleanor McAllister.

Funeral services were held on February 23, 2008, at the SDB Church of Shiloh, with Rev. Donald Chroniger officiating. Interment was in the church cemetery.

Probasco.—John M. Probasco, 88, of Bridgeton, N.J., died on February 27, 2008, at the South Jersey Healthcare-Regional Medical Center in Vineland after an extended illness.

He was born on October 2, 1919, in Perth Amboy, N.J., the son of John W. and Anna Matilda (Munch) Probasco. He was the husband of Katherine C. (Ravior) Probasco, who died in 1987.

John grew up in Greenwich, N.J., and was a 1937 graduate of Bridgeton High School. He then attended the West Point Preparatory School in West Point, N.Y.

During World War II, John served in the U.S. Army as a cavalry soldier in France, and was honorably discharged at the end of the war.

John worked as a life insurance agent and manager for Metropolitan Life Insurance in New Jersey, in both the Bridgeton and Atlantic City offices. While employed by MetLife, he attended various company-sponsored management schools. Following retirement, he worked as a counselor at the State School in Vineland.

John was a member of the SDB Church of Shiloh, and was an avid bowler. He was also a regular donor at area Red Cross blood banks.

Survivors include three daughters, Shirley Clark of Port Norris, N.J., Patricia Towles of Hopewell Township, N.J., and Kathy Probasco of Wilmington, Del.; two sons, John of Pasco, Wash., and David of Mays Landing, N.J.; three brothers, Robert of Lebanon, Pa., and Florida, and Donald and Owen, both of Shiloh; 13 grandchildren, 33 great-grandchildren, and three great-great-grandchildren. In addition to his wife, he was predeceased by one son, Kenneth; one sister, Marion Ferguson; and a granddaughter.

Funeral services were held on March 2, 2008, in the SDB Church of Shiloh, with Rev. Donald Chroniger officiating. Interment was in Fernwood Memorial Park in Hopewell Township.

KEVIN'S

ORNER

Whose image is this?

Benjamin Franklin is credited with the adage, "In this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes."

In *Gone With the Wind*, Margaret Mitchell added, "Death and taxes and childbirth! There's never any convenient time for any of them."

April 15 is "tax day" for citizens in the United States. It's the last day to file paperwork covering your previous year's income and expenses, then either submit the amount of money that the government owes you, or pay the

extra taxes you owe to "Uncle Sam."

One estimate from the Internal Revenue Service says that it takes the average American taxpayer nearly 27 hours to prepare the 1040 form and the most common supporting schedules.

I only wish that our household had the "most common" schedules. With the filing rules constantly in flux, another student in college, and complicated clergy and business forms, Janet has finally said "uncle" to Uncle Sam.

She's handing over our tax filing responsibilities to a professional tax preparer.

Coping with taxes is not just a modern dilemma. Jesus knew about taxes, as did generations of Jews before him. Temple taxes were in place at least 1,000 years before the birth of Christ. The money was used to maintain the temple and to support the priests.

Then, Israelites were assessed taxes to pay for their army and other public services. In Jesus' day, the Romans provided various services—but not for free. They imposed property taxes, purchase taxes, custom duties, and even duties on food. Unscrupulous tax collectors often extorted more money than they needed.

Rubbing salt in the wound was the method of payment: Jews had to pay their taxes with Roman money. Tax time for Israelites was an ugly reminder that they were occupied by a foreign power that didn't even worship the one, true God.

Every time they reached into their change purses for a coin, an image of the Roman Caesar appeared.

An image of someone trying to make himself into another god.

Jesus appealed to this image when he was asked, "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" (Matt 22:15-22).

With Pharisees and followers of Herod all around, it was appropriate for Matthew to use the word "entangle" to describe what Jesus was facing with this question.

If Jesus answered that it was lawful to pay the tax, in the eyes of his followers he would be "in league with the enemy." But if he said that it was unlawful, then he would be in deep trouble *with* the enemy.

Asking for a coin, Jesus posed the question, "Whose image is this, and whose title?"

It was Caesar's. "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's."

So, how do we know what things belong to Caesar? They have his image on them.

How do we know what things belong to God? They have *HIS* image on them.

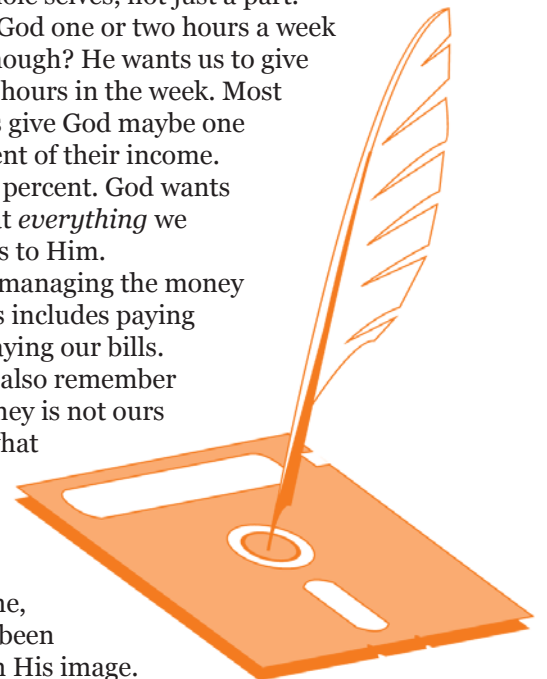
We are to give to God the things stamped with His image: that means us! We need to give the Lord our whole selves, not just a part.

Is giving God one or two hours a week at church enough? He wants us to give Him all 168 hours in the week. Most churchgoers give God maybe one or two percent of their income. A tithe is 10 percent. God wants us to see that *everything* we have belongs to Him.

Properly managing the money God gives us includes paying taxes and paying our bills.

We must also remember that the money is not ours alone, but what He has provided.

We need to be God's all of the time, for we have been marked with His image.





Important Memo:

**To: Friends of
The Sabbath Recorder**
From: Editor Kevin Butler

**DID YOU KNOW THAT THE SABBATH RECORDER
IS FUNDED BY YOUR GIFTS? YOUR DONATION TO
THE SABBATH RECORDER IS PART OF THE TOTAL
SDB DENOMINATIONAL BUDGET.**

**I HOPE THAT YOU HAVE BEEN ENJOYING THE
MAGAZINE DURING THIS PAST YEAR AND WILL
BE ABLE TO MAKE A TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION
TO THIS PART OF OUR SEVENTH DAY BAPTIST
CONNECTION AND OUTREACH. MAY GOD BLESS
YOU AND THANK YOU.**

GRACE AND PEACE,

Kevin



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Enclosed is my GIFT for *The SR*
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