



The
Sabbath
RECORDER

July-Aug. 2008

News for and about Seventh Day Baptists



**Declarations
of a
public
servant**

**Rounding up
the renegades
(for Sabbath School)**

**How are
Christians
accountable
to each other?**



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

- **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!

Lincoln is close to four major universities and five Christian colleges.

Nice communities, parks, and a variety of activities for children and families.

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

For information, contact Pastor Steve.

www.LivingWordSDB.org

LivingWord 
SDB Fellowship

God is at work among SDBs!

Our traditional **Conference Offering** will take place on Sabbath, August 9th, both at General Conference and in the local churches. However, this year there is nothing traditional about it.

The Boards and Agencies are working hard to develop exciting programs and opportunities for you. We have seven students involved in seminary! We are printing new tracts, updating Christian Education curriculum, and have a growing interest in short-term missions. There are more SCSC workers this year.

God is blessing us as a people of His Word.

Thank you for supporting your growing Conference of Seventh Day Baptists in Canada and the United States of America. —Rob Appel

Annual Corporation Meeting Notice

*Seventh Day Baptist
Board of Christian Education, Inc.*

The annual meeting of the members of the Seventh Day Baptist Board of Christian Education, Inc., will be held on the campus of Carthage College, Kenosha, Wis., on Tuesday, August 5, 2008, immediately following the evening worship service scheduled as part of the sessions of the 2008 Seventh Day Baptist General Conference USA and Canada, Ltd. The specific location for the meeting will be prominently announced on campus.

The purpose shall be to hear and act upon the 2007 Annual Report of the Board of Directors, and to consider and act upon such matters that may properly come before said meeting.

Members of the member churches of the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference USA and Canada, Ltd., are members of the corporation. Accredited delegates attending the 2008 General Conference sessions in Kenosha, Wis., are entitled to vote at this annual meeting.



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Declarations of one public servant

by Jim Goodrich

I have never felt comfortable telling other adults what their responsibilities should be.

I don't think it is the duty of one person—uninvited—to direct another in the path that he or she should traverse. My hackles get raised when someone suggests that I should or should not be taking a certain action, when I have not sought such input.

When I was a senior in high school, a social studies teacher informed me that I would probably go into one of three careers: education, clergy, or politics. At that time I wasn't sure what I wanted to do, but became certain that I had no interest in those occupations, especially since this teacher was so "sure" of the eventual direction of my life.

Was that teacher right?

Sometimes God works in funny ways.

*I consider
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community
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While attending the University of Nebraska in the early 1970s, we had a small group of Seventh Day Baptists who started meeting regularly on Sabbath, taking turns leading the service. I found the experience of preparing messages and

leading worship a comfortable one.

After graduation as I made my way back to the North Loup area with the love of my life (wife Helen), it was not surprising that I was asked on occasion to fill in when the pastor was away. By 1982 the church decided that I should have an official license to preach, and I have been so honored since.

Not a bad fit after all

Somewhere along the way I began to learn Solomon's lesson to "trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not on thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will make thy path straight" (Proverbs 3:5-6). It is a lesson that I have to keep in focus continually, since pride can allow me to be self-sufficient.

As I committed my life to the work that God had planned for me, I dis-

covered that teaching was not such a bad fit. For 16 years, He allowed me to interact with children in elementary classrooms.

Three for three?

It was another 20 years before the third prediction of that teacher of long ago would come to fulfillment.

A vacancy came up on the Village Board (that's like a City Council, except for fewer constituents) in 2001. Long believing that every person should take civic responsibility, I felt that getting appointed to that position would be a way for me to help maintain the visibility of the Seventh Day Baptist church in North Loup.

Certain that God was leading me

to take this action—and being the only applicant—I was pretty confident that I would get the nod. God had another lesson first. Several Board members were opposed to my appointment and someone else was asked to take the position. Ouch!

Feeling quite sure that I had not been wrong about this call to serve, I filed as a candidate the next year to replace another Board member. This time, I was elected by the people of North Loup to serve.

I'm currently in my second term. Two years ago, the man who had been chairman of the Board for two decades was not reelected. I somewhat reluctantly agreed to be nominated for that position and was elected.

Should everyone run?

Now, I do not believe that every Christian is expected to take a turn at political office. Some are not equipped for the rigors of public life. (I sometimes wonder if anyone really is when you consider how candidates are scrutinized by the press and public.)

Since we "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23) there is not a person alive who can display a perfect past to electors and constituents.

And while the investigative diligence of a local weekly newspaper can hardly compare to the national press coverage of major elections, people in a small town usually know you and can remember things from the past that you would rather have forgotten.

But I did not run for office because I thought I was worthy. I ran hoping that I have learned from past mistakes so as not to repeat them.

Meeting of the mundane

It certainly isn't the "glamour" of the position that keeps me involved in public life. Most of our meetings deal with problems such as finances,

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I believe strongly that everyone has some civic responsibility. It may not be to hold office, but those of us who are eligible should at least vote.

public health issues, utilities, complaint mediation, and the like.

I think there is probably a reason that elected officials are commonly referred to as “public servants.” It is generally expected that when one attains office, he or she automatically becomes a problem solver. That is not always an easy task.

Outside of a rare occasion where I officially represent the community at a special function, the job is rather mundane and tedious.

We all have a responsibility

I believe strongly that everyone has some civic responsibility. It may not be to hold office, but those of us who are eligible should at least vote.

It may be your vote that enables Christians to hold positions of authority in government. It may be your vote that prevents those with a “humanist” agenda from gaining power. It may be your vote that defeats laws that undermine the church and family in your community and nation.

Even beyond voting, there are opportunities to affect a positive influence on all levels of government. Have you ever attended a meeting of your local governing body? There is much to be learned by going to sessions held by school boards, town councils, county supervisors, legislatures and the like. They are all required to have open meetings, but it defeats the intent if no one from the public attends.

Lend a hand, or a kind word

Have you ever volunteered to assist in a project sponsored by a governing body? Many things need to be accomplished but go undone for lack of people power.

Have you ever expressed appreciation to those who perform the services required to keep local entities in operation? I can recall the many complaints and disparaging remarks, but it’s rare that someone has expressed a kind word on behalf of elected personnel.

Political office should never take precedence over being active in your local church. I would never allow



community activism to replace or interfere with the responsibilities I have toward the church. While I believe in the importance of community involvement, the business and nurture of the church is even more necessary.

Helps with visibility

I consider my position in the community to be a form of outreach—an extension of what we profess to do in our churches. As part of a very small denomination, we are always looking for ways to increase our visibility in order to reach out to those who might choose to serve the Lord and join our church.

You would think that in a place like North Loup (founded by SDBs), where ours is one of only two churches, that visibility would not be a

problem. But there are those in our town and county who have never heard of Seventh Day Baptists.

A week after the election, one of my first duties as Board chairman was to host an area television newscaster who was highlighting North Loup on her nightly program. What a pleasure to have correct and positive information about the SDB church and its importance to our town’s history—front and center on the nightly news, available to a large part of central Nebraska!

Whatever you do...

Positions of service should never be taken lightly. Wherever you find your place in public life, it is important to focus on the directive from Paul to the Colossians: “And whatsoever you do in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him” (Col. 3:17).

I want that to be my one goal—whether I remain in office, or God decides it’s time for that service to end.

From the time a Christian considers seeking public office, to the performance of that task, seek God’s direction. Allow Him to be in charge of your life, and you will succeed. **SR**



Jim Goodrich is a deacon at the

North Loup (Neb.) SDB Church, and was named the national Sabbath School Teacher of the Year in 2005.

Rounding up the renegades (for Sabbath School)

by Bonnie Severance

Even in a church building as large as ours, it seems that there is never enough room for Sabbath School classes.

When I came back home to North Loup, Nebraska, in 1959, I became the “renegade” Sabbath School teacher. There always seemed to be folks hanging around outside of the classrooms.

I first noticed four young boys (aged 12-14 or so) who chose not to go to class—since that’s where the girls were—and so they tried to leave. The furnace room, with a little cleaning, made a great place for us and we had some hot discussions in there. Eventually they went back to the regular class.

One man, who came to choir practice before church, thought he needed to go home after worship because he was too hungry. It seemed only right that I would bring cinnamon rolls and we met in the kitchen for class.

Some college students came back to church pretty much in favor of the “Big Bang theory.” We couldn’t have that, so I looked around for a new classroom. At the foot of the old stairs to the basement was a nook, used only to access a closet. We gathered in that little space to discover how and why we got here by God’s creative power and grace. One of those students later became a deacon.



*The
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and being a good listener.*

I have no idea how I ended up with the Junior High group. We made our home in the newly completed balcony classroom. A common sight was me carrying hot water to class so they could have hot chocolate. “Bribery” may not be right, but it seemed to work well.

Early teenage years are hard. The kids need a place to talk and find biblical answers to handle their problems. That class moved to the kitchen where they could walk around while they talked and tried to sort things out. The only materials I had was Bible knowledge and being a good listener.

One year we were blessed to have many young parents with new babies. How could they have a Sabbath

School class and watch their young’uns at the same time?

We decided to join two existing classrooms and circle the chairs around the babies in the middle of the room. The babies became acquainted and the adults had a class.

This started the inventory of playthings for the nursery as everyone brought toys to this class. In the early summer months we moved outside to the front steps, allowing the children to explore the out-of-doors. It wasn’t long before they had classes for the kids, and the adults went back to either teaching or attending other adult classes.

When the cult craze was at its height, we had a chance to hear from

cont. next page

the family of a girl who had run away and joined a cult. It reminded us how vulnerable people can be, so we did a study on Christianity and the cults with our high school and young college students.

Our material covered all modern religions—some I had never heard of—so it was a scramble to keep enough information on hand for the students. I relied on material received from different churches. (How much easier it would be now with the computer!)

One time, we visited a Catholic church. We heard what the priest had to say, and then filled our chart with our understanding of their church. I fear that I was nearly excommunicated from our church when I brought in a Ouija Board one week. I wanted to show it and discuss how people felt about it. It made a quick trip to the burn barrel.

We had a group of 40- to 50-year-old folks who were not going to Sabbath School, so we put two tables together outside of the downstairs classes and studied the *Helping Hand*. It was a large, energetic class and we wound up doing some play-acting on various subjects.

When Pastor Ken Burdick left for the west, my husband Cecil said, “Bonnie, why don’t you teach our class?” For the first time I said, “No.”

This was a class of “senior saints” of whom I was in awe. They were all so well-versed in the Bible. Cecil said, “You can.”

I prayed about it and we met in the pastor’s study. Discussing it with my son before we started, he said, “Mom, never ask a question without a name on the end of it.” This worked well and brought about lively discussions.

***We decided
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The babies
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I guess it worked too well. One Sunday morning about 6 o’clock, my phone rang. It was George Clement.

“Bonnie, remember that question you asked me yesterday? Well, I think the right answer should have been...” It was not unusual to hear from George early on Sunday mornings.

After several years, some in the group moved on to a Higher Home. It became hard, physically, for others to get to the basement. They moved to the sanctuary with a new teacher.

For the first time in many years, I was without a class—and found myself at the local café for coffee during Sabbath School hour.

I thought, *There’s something wrong with this picture. What would it take to get me to a class?*

The next week, hot cinnamon rolls lured the “coffee klatch” into the pastor’s study where we stayed until we had a new pastor, who re-arranged us right out of his office. Some classes had just combined so there was new space for us.

Now our class ranges in age from 40 to 85. We still eat sweets, drink coffee, and learn different meanings of Scripture. I put names to my questions and have a back-up who can be counted on to have a good answer.

The phone rang early one Sunday morning. I heard the voice of Don Clements (the son of George), saying, “Bonnie, you know what we were talking about yesterday? Well, I think...”

That’s what Sabbath School is about: searching the Scripture for God’s plan for our lives. My next class will be at God’s feet listening to Him. **SR**

Peggy Van Horn says that Bonnie Severance currently teaches an adult class in North Loup and is still challenging the students to search Scripture for the answers to life.



How are Christians accountable to each other?

by David Gushee

David Gushee is distinguished university professor of Christian Ethics at Mercer University, Atlanta, Ga. This was written for the Associated Baptist Press, Jacksonville, Fla.

One of the most vexing issues in Christian life is the question of accountability.

At every level of Christian community, this question arises. We know that Christians are accountable to God for their lives and will one day actually give an account (Matt. 25: 31-46; 1 Corin. 4:4; 2 Corin. 5:10).

But are we accountable to each other? Which others?

Are you accountable to: your pastor? Fellow church members? Fellow Sunday [Sabbath] School classmates? All members of your church? All Baptists? All Christians everywhere?

And, if the answer is “yes” to any of these, how is this accountability exercised?

It might be helpful to begin with those relationships in which accountability seems clear, and then move from there to the gray areas. I will speak in a personal voice here, and you can draw the parallels to your own life.

To God—

I know that I am accountable to God for the entirety of my life. Even though I trust Christ for salvation, I do not presume that this frees me

from accountability for my conduct. Quite the contrary—it heightens my accountability as one who has publicly confessed to serve Jesus Christ as Lord of my life.

To church—

As a Sunday School teacher at a local church, I know that I am accountable to the church leaders who

am likewise accountable to the dean, provost, and president, to the students, and in a sense to my colleagues. I am accountable in a specifically Christian sense because of the nature of my work, but also in a general “workplace” sense like anyone else who has a job that comes with specific accountability relationships.

I can think of only one biblical category that can encompass all types of accountability and set some coherent limits on them: the category of the Covenant.

appointed me to this role, and to the members who choose to attend the class. I am accountable to them for the fulfillment of my specific duties in this role—most particularly competent Bible teaching, but also a measure of pastoral care for the little community under my charge.

To work—

As a teacher at McAfee School of Theology and Mercer University, I

To family and country—

As a husband, I am accountable to my wife for the conduct of my life in every area that relates to her and touches on her life—which is nearly everything. I am accountable to my children for a number of specific responsibilities, as I am to my parents for other responsibilities and my sisters for yet others. As a citizen I have certain responsibilities for which I may be held accountable.

I can think of only one biblical category that can encompass all of these types of accountability and yet can set some coherent limits on them: the category of the Covenant.

So my tentative thesis is that ***We are accountable in every relationship in which we have explicitly covenanted with a person or a community for the fulfillment of certain specific promises and responsibilities.***

We do that explicitly at weddings, baby dedications, baptisms, ministerial installations, and in starting work at most jobs. We even do it *implicitly* in many instances where our conduct affects the well-being of others. (One might say that a restaurant has a “covenant” with its customers to serve them clean food, and a car company has a covenant with its customers to offer them a road-worthy vehicle.)

Still, this leaves us with a number of murky and unresolved questions of accountability:

- Am I accountable as a church member to every other member of First Baptist Church?
- Am I accountable as a Baptist to all other Baptists?
- Am I accountable as a writer to everyone who reads my columns and books?
- Am I accountable as a Christian to all other Christians?

Errors abound on all sides, leaning either toward hyper-accountability or toward non-accountability. Probably many of us have known Christian friends or fellow church members who believe it is their God-given role to correct us for our faults on a regular basis.

Here the words of Paul resonate: “It is a very small thing I should be judged by you

We are accountable in every relationship in which we have explicitly covenanted with



a person or a community for the fulfillment of certain specific promises and responsibilities.

or any human court.

I do not even judge myself... It is the Lord who judges me” (1 Corin. 4:3-4).

Paul here says that while servants of Christ are indeed “stewards of God’s mysteries,” their master is God, and only to God will they give an account.

On the other hand, we could cite cases in which outrageous stuff is going on in a family, church, workplace, school or nation—and no one is holding anyone to account.

This silence may be occurring in the name of personal freedom, or a commitment to non-judgmentalism, or fear of a confrontation, or in a diffusion of responsibility in which no one is accountable to anyone else for anything.

Paul himself was certainly unwilling to accept that the congregations he founded would be characterized by such laxity (1 Corin. 5).

One possible solution for us is to do better in clarifying on the front end what vision of accountability, if any, will characterize our relationships. If we voluntarily covenant together—in a friendship, or a congregation, or a workplace—to have “X” level of accountability to each other, related to “Y” matters, exercised in “Z” fashion, then uncertainty about accountability can be diminished.

I am coming to believe that only when we covenant together about how accountability works in a relationship should we expect to hold others accountable or to be held accountable ourselves. Otherwise, all accountability is left to God alone—Who alone can be trusted to get accountability right, in any case. **SR**

David Gushee’s latest book is *The Future of Faith in American Politics: The Public Witness of the Evangelical Center*.
www.davidpgushee.com.

Faith comes alive in India

by Becky Van Horn, Pataskala, Ohio, SDB Church

Last fall, our friends Judith and Joel Houts from Columbus, Ohio, invited us to go with them on a mission trip. They wanted us to go to Chennai, India, to assist in the Bible School program for the Calvary Baptist Church in April.

We prayed about it and were impressed to “prepare to go.”

The Lord’s almost-immediate provision made it obvious that He wanted us to be there. We were given the money for the trip, our shots, and visas (costing more than we expected). I had even asked the Lord about getting some jumpers to wear. A friend of mine, who didn’t know what I needed, brought me three! God was even picking out my clothes!

It was amazing to sit back and watch God work everything out. I said to Darwin one day, “Why can’t we live our lives like this all the time—just asking and trusting and watching it happen?”

We can honestly say that we had been “in training” our whole lives for this trip, from singing special music (Darwin), to kids’ songs and Bible stories (Becky), to adult teaching and ministry of healing and deliverance.

Participating in their small Bible College graduation, Judith preached for the four graduates—wonderful, godly, Spirit-filled men. We conducted a Women’s Retreat attended by over 190; a “Youth” Retreat at a village over an hour away, attended by 150 people (ages 5-80; all young at heart); and a Pastors and Wives Retreat. God blessed us as we shared the Gospel and prayed for healing and deliverance everywhere we went.

We did the first day’s activities for their Bible School of nearly 100 children. Only 20 of them had any Christian background, the rest were



Becky Van Horn greets the children at Bible School in Chennai, India.

Hindu. The School runs for two weeks. Last year’s program ended up with close to 500 children.

Every day, we were able to interact with the orphan boys at Calvary Baptist. (Judith says that she has never seen a group of young men more happy.) Most of the boys have either a mom or a dad, but the parent can’t take care of them. So they put them in the orphanage where they get food, clothes, shelter, and education.

One day we went to a leper colony to pray. We were disappointed that no fingers or toes grew back, but many were delivered of their pain. One lady, blinded by the leprosy, received her sight back! What a blessing.

We have so many stories to share. God was definitely there and waiting for us to start praying so He could bless those precious people. They were very open to receive ALL that He had for them and we had a “front-row seat.” It was awesome!

(This accompanying report comes from Judith Houts, co-director of Agape Ministry in Columbus):

Dr. Perumal Paramanandam (“Dr. P”) and his wife, Vasantha, are the founders and directors of the Calvary Baptist Bible College and Mercy Home Orphanage in Chennai, India. They were our hosts April 15-23.

We were impressed with the beautiful work being done there by Dr. P, his talented family, and his assistants.

The campus has a big church that sits 300 people. It has living quarters for the family, the associate pastor, and the College principal. It also houses the dorm, the orphanage, and a widow from their church.

As we learned, widows in India have a very harsh life and are not taken care of by family members or the government. They are obliged to become beggars, unless Christians like Dr. P give them a place to stay and food to eat.

Dr. P’s vision is to establish 1,000 churches throughout India. At this point he has 130. Not all of them have a building; some meet under a tree in a village.

He trains his pastors for three years, then commissions them to go out and each plant 10 churches. We had the honor of giving a seminar to 15 of his pastors and some of their wives, truly men and women of God. Some traveled five days by bus and train—one way—to get to the retreat.

We began with praise songs by Darwin and Becky, followed by four Bible sessions. Judith, directing the second session to the pastors and wives, focused on the importance of acting as a team and keeping the lines of communication open.

Joel shared that it’s not the length and hardship of the journey that are important, nor the number of listen-

cont. on page 26

Like ripples in a pond

by MerryEtta Fitz-Randolph



In 1961, in the town of Milton, Wisconsin, there lived two very special women—Linda Bingham and Caroline Gray.

Linda was a young girl, full of love for God and life.

She had gone to Metairie, Louisiana, to perform dedicated service for the Seventh Day Baptist denomination. She stayed there for the summer.

At the same time, Caroline—a mother with four grown daughters—presided over the SDB Women’s Board.

In the fall of 1961, Caroline went to the Seventh Day Baptist Building in Plainfield, New Jersey, to represent the Women’s Board at a special meeting. During that meeting, there was discussion about the possibility of the Women’s Board starting and sponsoring a program that would give young SDBs the opportunity to give dedicated service during the summer.

Caroline agreed to present the idea to the ladies at their next gathering.

Meanwhile, Linda Bingham was asked by Ralph and Jack Hays if she could bring a group of young people back with her after she went home to Milton for Christmas.

When she was in Milton, Linda visited Caroline in her home. In the course of their

conversation, it came up that the Women’s Board wanted to launch a youth-oriented dedicated service program, and that Linda wanted to take a group of workers back with her!

They both became quite excited about how their plans seemed to fit together. (They said, “Like a hand fits the glove.”)

This was the beginning. Three other young people from the Milton Seventh Day Baptist Church went to Louisiana with Linda—sponsored by the Women’s Board.

Several years later, the Board named their project: **“Summer Christian Service Corps.”**

That was well over 40 years ago.

When I think of how many teams there have been, the places they have served, the people that each worker has blessed in some way, I think of ripples in a pond that work their way to the shore when a stone is thrown out into the middle.

Linda Bingham Hays has—in so many ways—“rippled” the love of God into the hearts of His people. **SR**

Linda Hays passed away on Mother’s Day this year. Her obituary is on page 25. Please also see her last article on the Women’s page, opposite.





Grandma Linda's surprise

by Linda Hays

From Susie Bond:

Linda (Bingham) Hays was our SDB Youth Field Worker in the early 1960s, the forerunner of our present Summer Christian Service Corps program. It was in SCSC that Linda's daughter met my son.

As a result, two of my grandchildren were also hers. Linda passed away in May. In one of her last writings, she shared this about our mutual granddaughter Kacie.

* * *

At the end of a day of housework, cooking, and laundry, I sank into my recliner and leaned back to put up my tired feet. Granddaughter Kacie was delighted.

She and I play all sorts of games during my sit-down times. My chair becomes a teacher's desk, a car, a doctor's office—just to fulfill the whimsical imagination of a 6-year-old.

On this particular day, Kacie had something else in mind. In her sweet chatterbox voice, she asked, "Grandma, would you like a foot rub?"

Would I! "Oh, yes! I would indeed enjoy a foot rub."

Kacie untied my shoes, loosened the laces and took off both my shoes and socks. She ran to the bathroom and returned with a bottle of lotion.

Oh, it felt so good to have her little hands rubbing that lotion on my sore, tired feet. When she finished she brought my slippers from the bedroom and with a very proper, "Here you are, ma'am," slipped them on my feet.

I thanked Kacie profusely for the excellent "TLC," but she wasn't fin-



*Grandma
Linda Hays
with
Kacie Bond.*

ished. From the kitchen she brought me a cookie, nicely wrapped in a paper napkin.

Next she poured a glass of juice and set it carefully on the side table by my chair.

"Now, ma'am, would you like anything else?"

"No, sweetie, I think you've covered all the bases," I replied with a taste of cookie on my tongue.

"Good!" Kacie was quick to exclaim. "Now you gotta pay me!"

That declarative took me by surprise and I laughed. But being a good grandma, I gave my sweet grandchild a few coins from my purse. Her family was, after all, saving for a trip to Disney World, and Kacie took her part seriously.

Now think about this: Do we ever do our good works and service to God with the expectation of being

"paid" when we've done what we think is enough?

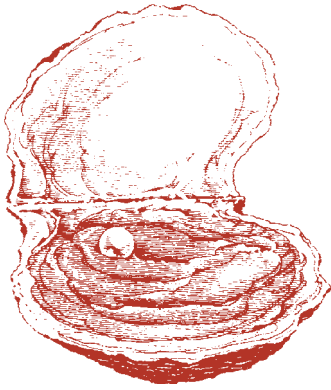
Yes, I know we can expect an eternal reward—a home in heaven, a crown of glory, call it what you will. That's not what I'm talking about.

We hear so much of the "prosperity" religion, reaping a beautiful harvest if we've sown the seed in faith. It's Scriptural, but *that* shouldn't be the motive for our good works. The attitude with which we serve the Lord should be *Christ-centered*, not self-centered.

Give (do) with no thought of what "pay" might result. The hymn says, "I would be giving, and forget the gift."

We are to forget what we have given, how much, and to whom.

Forget the possibility of receiving a gift in return. We will be happily surprised by what God has in store for us when it comes. **SR**



Separate but not sectarian

Seventh Day Baptists trace their roots to the 1650s. James Ockford, William Sallers, Henry Jessey, Peter Chamberlain, John James, James Bampfield, the Stennett family—these came to a conviction of the seventh-day Sabbath, yet most retained their membership (and pastoral role) in the Baptist branch of the Reformation in England.

The Stennett family is the best known among English Seventh Day Baptists. For over a century, the name “Stennett” represented the wide practice of later SDBs who associated not only with Baptists, but also with other Protestant churches.

Edward Stennett was a strong contender of the Sabbath, and suffered persecution for his belief. His son, Joseph, pastored the Pinner’s Hall SDB Church, while supplying other churches on Sunday.

In the third generation, Joseph II was primarily a pastor of the Little Wild Street Baptist Church, but maintained a close relationship with his father’s church and often supplied the pulpit there.

A current Seventh Day Baptist historian, Oscar Burdick (with extensive research in English SDB roots), wrote: “As to his personal religion, he [Joseph II] was a Seventh-Day Particular Baptist, but vocationally, he always served first-day Baptist churches. Historians of both denominations claim him as an important person.”

Fourth generation Samuel Stennett held Sabbath convictions, but

was primarily associated with the Little Wild Street Baptist Church. However, the record shows that for nearly 20 years he freely served at Pinner’s Hall on a part-time basis.

Other dissenting voices during the English Reformation held strong Sabbath convictions in the Church of England. Among these was Peter Chamberlain, personal physician to both Charles I and Charles II. He wrote extensively in the fields of medicine, public health, social and economic reform. His tombstone lists his death as 1683, and states that he had kept the seventh-day Sabbath for 32 years.

The same relationship that was prevalent in England has been maintained in America. We have had close relations with other Baptists in the founding of Rhode Island College, the Baptist World Alliance, and other Baptist organizations.

Seventh Day Baptists have also been involved in a wide variety of local, denominational, and interdenominational programs.

We have often received a “disproportionate print” in Baptist publications. A classic book by Albert Wardin, *Baptists Around the World* (1995) included a summary history of our General Conference in the United States, as well as paragraphs about our overseas missions.

A more recent book, *Baptist Rivers*, by Broadman Press, included a chapter on Seventh Day Baptists.

For over a century, SDBs have held a disproportionate number of leadership positions in the ecumenical world, where our distinctive of the Biblical Sabbath has been respected, though not adopted.

However, it is in the local church where our ecumenicity has been

most effective. Since our worship services are on the seventh-day Sabbath, many of our leaders and members have found outlets of service in Sunday congregations.

No statistics are available for the number of our clergy who have served (and still do) in various levels of pastoral service in Methodist, Congregationalist, Baptist and other churches on Sunday. I am aware of one SDB who served as interim pastor for a total of 15 different Sunday churches for periods of from three months to three years. Two of these interims were circuits of three churches. One involved a 100-mile round trip each Sunday. (Try that with current gas prices!)

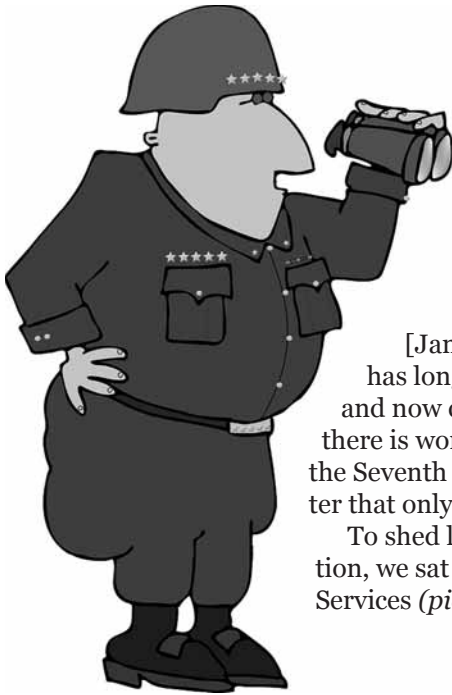
Not only have our pastors been involved in ministry at other churches, but the musical talent of our laity has also been tapped extensively. Organists and pianists are in demand at other churches; our vocalists have been known to solo or even direct choirs in other congregations.

Ministries to children and youth have often been shared with other churches through Christian Endeavor, Scouting, and youth camps. At the close of the 2007-2008 school year, the AWANA program at the Milton, Wis., SDB Church reported over 100 children enrolled. A large percentage of the children came from other churches, or listed no church affiliation.

Many of our churches have also been active in cooperative worship services for Thanksgiving, Christmas, Lent, or other ecumenical times.

Cooperation with other Christians should not be considered as a compromise, but rather an opportunity to share with others that which God has ordained as a blessing. **SR**

Undercover Operation suspected at SDB Center



[Janesville, Wis.]— It has long been suspected, and now confirmed, that there is work being done at the Seventh Day Baptist Center that only few are aware of. To shed light on this operation, we sat down with General Services (*pictured*).

SR: General Services, sir, is it true that your operation at the SDB Center has been somewhat secret?

General Services: No, it is not a secret! It's just that very few realize the importance of the work that my troops perform.

SR: So, you have troops in place here, sir? Can you tell us what they are doing?

GS: Certainly. Down on the main floor we have the mailroom operation. Someone has to prepare all of those *Sabbath Recorders* and *Helping Hands* and first-class mailings, get them into the hands of the Post Office, and have them delivered all over the world! The personnel at the Center are continually funneling materials to the mailroom—and my troops are ready!

And then, of course, there's the power.

SR: Power? And who has the power?

GS: Everyone—thanks to my troops! I'm talking about the power that turns on the lights, the computers,

the copiers, heat and air conditioning... all of that kind of power.

Do you think it just “happens”? No way. My troops are at the ready every time someone at the Center flips a switch. Power!

SR: Do you have any other troops lurking about?

GS: Sure do! We've got a few real good agents here under my command.

SR: Agents, General?

GS: My right-hand man is Special Agent Rob Appel. Agent Appel continues to coordinate the ground operations, keeps the teamwork and communications flowing among the other agents, and visits the troops in the field. It's a real morale booster!

We have more agents in charge of website operations, accounting and secretarial, upkeep of the building and grounds...

SR: Amazing. Doesn't all this take a great deal of money?

GS: Yes it does! And, you know, nobody likes to talk about that. Guess you could call that the “secret” part of the operation. So many people think it just “happens,” and so funding goes everywhere else.

I think you'd notice soon enough when the lights go out and the troops are gone, and you'd sit there wondering why we “up and left” the place.

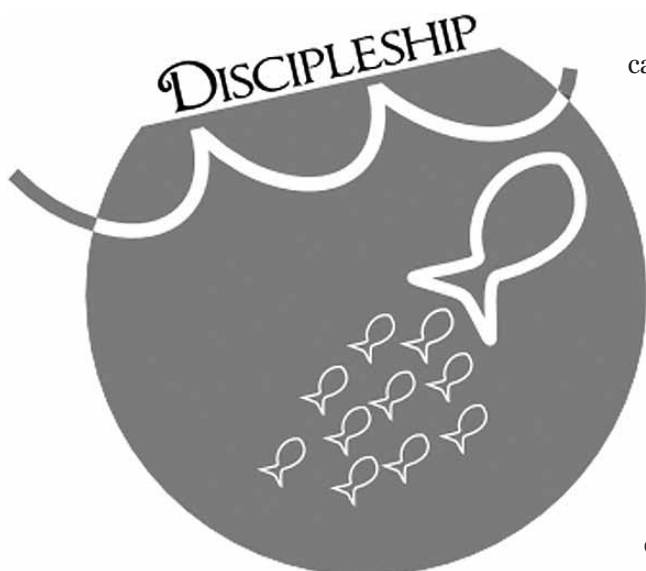
Yes, it takes money to run our operation, and we sure could use some right about now. **SR**

You can help General Services fund this “**Undercover Operation**”

Send your tax-deductible gift to:
Seventh Day Baptist Center
PO Box 1678
Janesville WI 53547



Christian Education Sabbath slated for September 6



Think carefully about how you encourage others in your church to grow and to work. Ponder how your actions and your words either aggravate dissension or promote harmony.

God has given you the job to help others grow up. He also calls you to let others help you.

God wants you to grow up. He works directly in our lives to cause growth. He has also chosen to work through our brothers and sisters in Christ, especially those who gather with us as God's Church.

Not only has God said that He wants us to think about how we

can drive others toward love and good deeds, He also wants us to gather with others to put these thoughts into action (Hebrews 10:24-25).

This intentional growing together should not sound strange to you; it is an integral part of how God designed His Church. We know that Christ "gave some as apostles, some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers." The reason He gave

us people with these abilities is to equip us "for the work of ministry."

What is this ministry? It is building up the body of Christ, a task that is not done "until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-13, NASB).

So, we are working within God's design as we strive to help each individual grow up into Christ's full stature.

Consider how this ministry (and equipping) occurs in your local church. Remember that you should be actively involved in pushing others to grow, and letting them push you.

Christian Education Sabbath is the Board of Christian Education's way of encouraging your church to look with discernment at the equipping and ministry opportunities God places in your local covenant community. It is your chance to participate both in being equipped and in building others.

Christian Education Sabbath falls each year on the Sabbath following Labor Day. This year the emphasis is scheduled for September 6. To help plan this special day, printed materials will be mailed to churches in early July.

While the overall emphasis remains the same from year to year, the themes follow a five-year pattern: Sabbath School, Evangelism, Nurture, Discipleship, and Stewardship. Discipleship is the theme for 2008. We will remember the Great Commandment, the second great command, the call to make disciples, and the example of Ezra, who "set his heart to study the law of the LORD and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel" (Ezra 7:10, NASB).

Even now, as your summer begins, set your heart on God's Word and way. Then, as summer gives way to fall, consider again how God has chosen to use your local church in your life, and you in the lives of others. **SR**



Sudanese SDBs in Omaha

by Kirk Looper

It was so exciting to visit the group of Sudanese SDBs in Omaha, Nebraska, again.

They have changed worship locations and now meet in the Africa Day Care Center at 3427 South 42nd Street in Omaha. This center runs 24 hours each day, seven days a week. It is a good location and easily found.

We were pleased to find out that the daycare's owner is also Sudanese, although from a different denomination. He appeared eager to share his facilities with the church for a short while. In the meantime, Pastor Mading Bol continues to search for another meeting place. Our prayers go out to him as they need to find a facility within their means.

When we visited in June, the congregation appeared to have fewer members than before. Between 10 and 15 adults were in attendance, plus a good number of small children.

Many of the former attendees have moved from Omaha to Anchorage, Alaska. A good portion of those who left were in leadership positions. They are now working to plant a church in Anchorage. It will be interesting to watch a group develop there and reach out into that state.

Since the group in Omaha meets in a daycare center, the children kept busy with the toys until the service started. The older children were then expected to sit and pay attention to what was going on during the service. They were attentive and quiet. Some of them took part in singing hymns with the adults.

Their mission work includes outreach to Ethiopia and Sudan. Each year, one or more of them travel back to those countries in Africa to evangelize in the areas where they have friends and established churches.

Their next desire is to have me (as Executive Director of the Missionary Society) visit their home country with them. This show of support should encourage the church members to reach out to their neighbors in Africa.

They are excited to have found our denomination and are eager to use our connections and experience to spread the Gospel.

The churches in Ethiopia are located mainly in border towns and villages adjacent to Sudan. Pastor Bol speaks of 10 or so churches.

The congregations are composed mainly of refugees from Sudan who left during the time of much war and grief. The group currently located in Omaha was part of this exodus. Other groups of these refugees are found in Minnesota and Alaska.

We see great potential for the growth of Sudanese churches in the United States. We praise God for this opportunity to help them reach out.

Several SDB churches in the Sudan are under the leadership of Joseph Jada Wani. These groups were organized over the past seven years, but are not connected with the Sudanese in Omaha. It appears

that the two groups speak different languages and are having a difficult time getting together.

The churches in Sudan are located in the southern part of the country. It's almost as if Sudan has two countries. The northern part is composed of Muslims, while the southern part is populated by Christians.

They even have different capitals. In the north the capital is Khartoum, while Juba is capital in the south. They are very enthusiastic about the possibility of visiting those churches as well.

We continue to work with the Sudanese as they develop. Their paperwork is complete to join our Conference (USA and Canada), but the attendance and membership numbers need to be increased.

Please pray for our Sudanese brothers and sisters as they work hard to grow and develop their church. **SR**

***We see great potential
for the growth of
Sudanese churches
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to help them reach out.***



the BEACON

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

July-Aug. 2008

Run the race

by Chris Davis, Marlboro, N.J.

“Do you know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly, I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize” (1 Corinthians 9:24-27).

My father likes to go bike riding. He and a couple of friends go biking almost every weekend.

Recently, he joined in a ride to the bay and back: a total of 100 miles. Now, you have to understand that my dad is not the most physically fit person. It's not that he is drastically out of shape, he just isn't quite *in* shape.

On weekends, he normally bikes around 30 or 40 miles. He was nowhere near prepared for 100 grueling miles, and so he trained—hard.



Finally the day came. He and a friend started out and rode. They pedaled, and rode, and pedaled, and rode, and pedaled... Well, you get the picture.

After more than seven hours, almost by some miracle, they completed the 100 miles.

Although my Dad was not competing for a prize, we all are competing for an amazing prize in our daily lives: eternal life. While those athletic trophies you might have won in high school are now lost in the depths of your basement, covered in a network

of spider webs, the prize of eternal life will not grow old and musty.

Heaven is not made out of that cheap plastic and imitation marble with scratches galore; it has streets paved with pure gold and a resounding perfection.

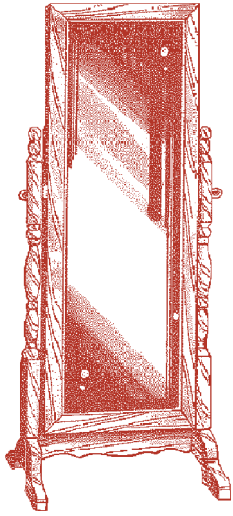
Just the thought of heaven should drive you to reach the goal of walking through those gates.

To reach heaven we have to train, and train hard. What is the point of helping others train, if we ourselves are in no condition?

If we are not in shape—if we are faltering in our run with God—we need to get ourselves back in shape before we can even think of helping someone else. People cannot help others if they can't help themselves.

That is why we train, why we expand our faith—so we are ready to help others. People put in years of practice toward just a few short minutes of glory (like the track trophies), but we train for eternal life.

Training takes more than a few minutes; it takes a lifetime. How much time do you spend training? **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

Retirement catching on

"There will be large numbers of fish... Fishermen will stand along the shore... there will be places for spreading nets [and casting out fishing lines with bobbers]. The fish will be of many kinds..." (Ezekiel 47:9-10, NIV, and I added the bobbers thing).

I've always loved to fish. When I was little, I would stand beside puddles in the grass and "fish" with a string tied to a long stick. With no hook, I never did catch any "grass bass."

Recently, I drove to Delavan, Wis., to fish along a rocky shoreline near a small bridge. It was my first solo fishing excursion of the year, and the first time I really felt "retired" since leaving my job at the Center.

There I was in the Great Outdoors, enjoying the beautiful weather, the gorgeous scenery, and God, the Creator of it all.

I had been at the same spot just the day before with family members. It was priceless to see the excitement on my grandchildren's faces as a redwing blackbird sang to us. We also spotted a mother duck swimming near the shore, trailed by 17 frantically paddling balls of yellow fluff. Seconds later, two Canadian geese floated past with their teenage goslings.

But this day there were no grandchildren to distract me from my goal of catching my limit of fish.

As I settled into my "spot," I noticed a familiar-looking face. A middle-aged black man I had talked to the day before was back in his spot. (We fishermen are very territorial.)

We greeted each other and exchanged smiles.

Soon, I was asking for his help in opening a container of new hooks. He pointed out that I first needed to peel off the cellophane tape. I felt stupid, but he remarked, "That tape is pretty hard to see."

That's when I asked, "What's your name?" "Chuck," he replied.

The fish were biting, but I was spending way too much time untangling lines since I was trying to fish with two poles. As Chuck wisely

noted, "I have my hands full managing just one."

So here was my first lesson of the day: It's easy to take on too much; to get tangled up in life. It's better to concentrate on a few tasks and do them well, than to get overwhelmed by trying to do too much with the gifts that God has given us.

Later in the afternoon, Chuck helped me land a "keeper" largemouth bass that I had caught on a small hook with an even smaller red worm. Two more lessons rang out: Don't automatically turn down help from a stranger, and big isn't necessarily better. (The fish ignored the large night crawler on my other line.)

I caught a lot of bluegills, but the indisputable highlight of the day was catching the bass. It was a serendipitous moment that literally gave me goose bumps.

After placing the large fish in my pail, I yelled over to Chuck, "I think this is what heaven will be like!"

Chuck left before I did. Gathering up his pail and pole, he turned and said, "See ya later, darlin'." Suddenly I felt like a kid again, fishing in a puddle and catching a new friend.

By the time I was ready to leave, five other people were fishing along the bank. Of course, I showed off my bass when asked if I had caught anything.

As I passed the final fisherman, I quoted a plaque that I had at the Center for years: "When God created the earth, He made it one-part land and two-parts water. He knew that man would fish more than he would plow." **SR**



Granddaughter Jocelyn is not sure she wants to be near a fish that's almost as big as she is!



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 freedom to choose

One of my favorite authors says, "The only true freedom each of us has in life is the freedom to choose. But once we choose, we become the servant of our choices."

Life is made up of a series of choices, one after the other. What will I do for a career? Who will I marry? Where will I live? How much education will I get? Which church will I be a part of?

While we are not given the privilege of choice in a few significant areas—such as who is related to us biologically, our sex, or the time and place of our birth—there are a host of other areas where we have the great advantage of choice.

I've always contended that if a person says, "I have no choice" regarding any matter, that person is acknowledging a very serious condition, which is bondage. Only a person "in shackles" of some sort has no choice.

The freedom to choose is an inalienable right endowed upon us as human beings; it is fundamental to the Creator's image embedded in us. We often fail to understand the beauty of being able to freely choose a path that leads us to fulfillment and purpose.

We make choices multiple times each day. In a few months, the United States will make a choice as to

who will be the next President. That is not a privilege to be taken lightly.

As we engage in the multiplicity of choices that face us daily, there are two that I encourage you to make with great care, if you've not already done so.

One is echoed in the very convicting verse found in Joshua 24:15, as Joshua spoke to the Israelites. In part, that verse says, "Choose you this day whom you will serve." Every one of us must make that choice.

The other is, "Who will you become?"

Again, we all must make that choice.

In choosing whom I will serve, is there any better option than our great Lord? When I put God up against all other rivals, the choice is like the difference between diamond and mud. So, like Joshua, I have decided that "as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

In choosing who I will become, I recognized that my attitude is my choice. I can't always choose what happens *to* me, but I can always choose what happens *in* me.

Another way to say it is that God chooses *what* we go through, and we choose *how* we go through it. Real and lasting limitations are generated in our minds, not in

our bodies. Attitudes determine actions. You are not what you think you are. What you *think*, you are.

I also recognize that my character is my choice. In some ways, it is the sum total of all my everyday choices. What I *do* may fade away, but what I *am* survives me by its impact on others. The test of a person's real character is what that person would do if she knew she would never be found out.

My values are also my choice. When I love something, it is of value to me, and when it is of value, I spend time with it, enjoying it and caring for it. Some of us may need to conduct a "values audit" in our lives. For such an exercise, look at your calendar, review your budget, compare it to your spending habits, and think about your passions. All of those things will inevitably lead us to an accounting of our values.

If we're living by values that run contrary to our theology or ideals, then we must consider what changes need to be made to align who we are, what we believe, and what we do.

Our historian emeritus, Don Sanford, has called Seventh Day Baptists "A Choosing People."

May we continually choose to become a hungry people, and to serve our limitless God. **SR**



by Executive Director
Rob Appel

Conference Executive's yearly report

Since Conference 2007, I have visited Seventh Day Baptists in a variety of settings.

You have entrusted me with a wonderful responsibility of traveling to our churches and Associations to spread goodwill and promote the entire work of the Conference. Here are some of those visits:

- 22 different churches with a total of 28 visits
- Four Association meetings and one by video
- “Canopy” meeting with pastors and Conference Execs in Verona, N.Y.
- Two Coordinating Leadership Team (CLT) meetings
- Two General Council meetings
- Two conference calls of the General Council
- Two Memorial Fund meetings
- Historical Society annual meeting
- Pastor Helmer Umana’s ordination service
- Seven visits with pastors
- Six future Conference site visits

I have been away from my home church of Milton a total of 21 Sabbaths this past year. Sometimes I feel like a visitor when I come home. Yet it is exciting to see new faces each time I return.

You have empowered me to work with areas of conflict and reconciliation. This has been a year for that! But we have been able to reconcile our differences thus far. I pray that we will continue to work in harmony for the work of Christ’s Kingdom and the work of Seventh Day Baptists.

In late February, I went back to Kiln, Miss., with a group from Milton working under the auspices of the Samaritan’s Purse ministry. In the past we were to repair or tear down the storm-ravaged homes following Hurricane Katrina. It was a pleasure to build something new this time.

This Gulf Coast ministry has certainly been a blessing. While we might be the ones doing work for others, we are actually being ministered to. It is a wonderful opportunity to see the thankful faces while we labor as God’s servants. Many people down South were led to believe that “Yankees” don’t care for them. They were shocked when people came from the North and worked on their homes.

If you get the chance to go on a short-term mission trip, do it! You will be blessed in so many ways. Just ask those who have had this opportunity, then get ready to make plans!

You have selected me to represent the Conference at various ecumenical events. I have been to two Baptist Joint Committee meetings, the New Baptist Covenant and follow-up meeting, and NABF (North American Baptist Fellowship) conference calls and meetings with NABF members. I also continue to represent SDBs with the Baptist World Alliance.

In all of these endeavors I have traveled over 34,000 miles since our Conference last year.

On a personal note, I would like to thank you for your prayers. Many times when I am traveling I feel the protection and presence of the Holy Spirit. This is something I used to feel when my mother was alive and I knew when she was praying for me. It means so much to know that you are doing the same. Thank you!

You have trusted me to do the right thing, say the right words, pray the healing prayer, suffer with the suffering, and celebrate with those rejoicing. For all of these travels, visits, prayers, worship, reconciliation, support and trust, I thank you. May God bless us all as we work in bringing the lost to Jesus.

In Christ’s Service, Rob Appel 



True abundance

by Morgan Shepard

This time last year we talked about “finishing the race.” But when is the race really finished? What do we win?

We are in the race until we are called Home. So until then, we need to “keep the ball rolling.” (Watch for this catchphrase at Conference!)

As we prepare to head to Carthage College and the 196th General Conference session, I wanted to give you a quick update on how things are doing financially for the General Conference and the Boards and Agencies.

Agency	Yearly Need	Received	%
BCE	53,644.00	14,533.71	27.09%
COM	64,923.00	23,626.20	36.39%
GS	174,200.00	55,156.03	31.66%
HS	2,000.00	1,470.00	73.50%
MS	58,558.00	19,643.19	33.54%
TCC	57,000.00	14,108.98	24.75%
WS	29,700.00	6,080.65	20.47%
Total	440,025.00	134,618.76	30.59%

If you are to believe the media (the *Sabbath Recorder* not included), you would hear that finances are tight all over for families, churches and businesses. Housing prices are down, foreclosures are up, gas prices are way up!

But do they take into account the *abundance* that God has promised those who have Jesus as their Lord? Our wealth does not come from this world, but from God’s abundance in heaven.

So far this year the General Conference has faced (on two occasions) the specter of not having enough funds to meet our basic needs: payroll, taxes, and utilities. We let you know about it the first time and some of you responded with gifts that kept us operating. Thank you!

We are facing yet another occasion of our bills outpacing available funds. Are we worried? To be honest, a little. We aren’t nervous because we don’t have the money, but because we face the possibility of not being able to serve you and the local church.

As you head to General Conference, please keep the work of the Boards and Agencies in your prayers. Also, continue to pray for your local church. Any financial blessings you can provide your church or the General Conference are truly appreciated. But they still won’t compare to the abundance God has for us.

See you in Carthage!

“And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well” (Luke 12:29-31). **SR**

Agency	Received	Need	Diff.
BCE	14,533.71	22,351.67	(7,817.96)
COM	23,626.20	27,051.25	(3,425.05)
GS	55,156.03	72,583.33	(17,427.30)
HS	1,470.00	833.33	636.67
MS	19,643.19	24,399.17	(4,755.98)
TCC	14,108.98	23,750.00	(9,641.02)
WS	6,080.65	12,375.00	(6,294.35)
Total	134,618.76	183,343.75	(48,725.00)

The chart above gives you a snapshot of the financial health of the Conference through May 2008. We currently have a **27% shortfall** which equals 1-1/3 months!

Ideally we budget to receive \$36,669 per month in designated and undesignated giving. While these figures represent five months of your generous gifts, it shows us that there is a way to go. A few of the Boards still have their annual fundraising later in the year so there is time.

Bond Scholarship supports seminarians

by Gordon Lawton

On any given Sabbath, 90 SDB churches and groups meet in the USA and Canada. Most groups have a designated pastor, while some are seeking to have that position filled.

Fourteen of those currently serving as pastors are over age 65; some are over 80. Twenty-four current pastors are between age 55 and 65. So in the next ten years, to provide leadership to our current churches, we will need up to 38 new pastors.

Granted, not all will retire at 65 or 70, and some will serve as long as God gives them strength. But it is realistic to plan for a minimum need of 20-25 new pastors in the next decade. And if God blesses with new churches, we will need even more.

Many of you have seen this year's prayer card from the SDB Center on Ministry, highlighting our seminary students. It is exciting to see these men preparing for ministry. In reality, all seven are already ministering, filling pulpits or leading worship. One is an SDB pastor. This means that there are six who will hopefully fill some of the coming needs. This, however, is less than a third of the need.

The Council on Ministry has been training SDB pastors for 45 years. The primary support has been in financial aid for seminary or Bible College; Training In Ministry by Extension (T.I.M.E.) for currently serving pastors; and training in SDB History, Polity, and Sabbath Theology. In addition, a scholarship—intended for full-time seminary students—honors Rev. Charles and Mrs. Margaret Bond.


Charles' many years of service included SDB pastorates in Hebron, Pa., Little Genesee, N.Y.; Westerly, R.I.; and Shiloh, N.J. He died in February 1996.

A month later, his family created the *Charles H. Bond Seminary Scholarship Fund* in the "hope to perpetuate both the memory and the ministry of this dedicated Christian who spent his earthly life spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ from parish pulpits, in religious camps, and in many homes and communities throughout the Seventh Day Baptist denomination."

In March of this year, Margaret Skaggs Bond also went to be with the Lord. Their children renamed the endowment as the *Rev. Charles H. and Margaret S. Bond Seminary Scholarship Fund*. The Memorial Board holds this fund, and the granting of scholarships is the joy of the Council on Ministry.

The interest from this fund is already providing assistance for seminarians preparing to be SDB pastors. Scholarship recipients have been: Steven Graffius (now pastor in Lincoln, Neb.), John Pethtel (now pastor at the Metro Atlanta SDB Church, Ga.), and most recently Dustin Mackintosh, currently attending Denver Seminary.

Additional gifts to the fund may be sent to the SDB Center, PO Box 1678, Janesville WI 53547. Please note that they are for the Charles and Margaret Bond Seminary Scholarship Fund.

If God is speaking to you about preparing for pastoral leadership, please contact me at the Center (address above) or by e-mail at dean@sdbministry.org. 

Red, White and Blue Sabbath in Alfred Station, N.Y., in May



All Dressed Up— Servicemen, veterans and widows decked in patriotic colors. **Front row:** Calvin Babcock, Derek Sutton, Nelson Snyder and Eric Massa. **Second row:** [guest], Reid Mattison and Jeff Bottoms. **Third row:** John Brundage, Russ Allen and Louise Woodruff. **Fourth row:** Paul Brundage, Mark Lewis and Mrs. Robert R. Dana. **Fifth row:** Raymond Wilson,

George Bottoms and Gladys Woodruff. **Top row:** Mary Jane Reid, Evelyn Thomas, Juanita Barnes and Ivan Cherry.

Historical Society meets

by Nick Kersten

The Seventh Day Baptist Historical Society held its annual meeting May 11, 2008, at the SDB Center in Janesville, Wis. Though few members attended the meeting in person, the Society was well represented by the proxies of over 50 members, nearly one-fourth of the total.



Meeting at the SDB Center were Society Board members (l. to r.): Norma MacLuskie, Norma Rudert, Janet Thorngate, Nick Kersten, Ruth Burdick, and Paul Green.

The Society voted to adopt its 2007 annual report and elected a new director to serve a five-year term. She is Norma MacLuskie, member of the Riverside, Calif., SDB Church and resident of Newport News, Va. Norma replaces Pastor Chris Mattison of North Loup, Neb.,

who served for five productive years on the Society's Board.

Librarian-Historian Nicholas Kersten also gave a brief presentation on the history of Seventh Day Baptist missions to Palestine.

Following the meeting, a special reception honored Pastor Mattison's years of service to the Society. **SR**

New members

Montrose, CA

Scott Hausrath, pastor

Joined after baptism

Elijah Welch

Joined after testimony

Steve Welch

Houston, TX

Jim Barclift, pastor

Joined after testimony

Daniel Turcotte

Jesus Rico

Caylee Rico

Births

Ziembra.—A daughter, Taylor Anne Ziembra, was born to Michael and JoAnne (Johnson) Ziembra of North Adams, MA, on December 2, 2007.

Pethtel.—A daughter, Addison Louise Pethtel, was born to John and Tabatha (Will) Pethtel of Dallas, GA, on January 10, 2008.

2008 SDB General Conference Operating Budget

Board / Agency	Monthly Operating Budget	Monthly Giving Towards Budget	Received May '08	Over / (Short)
General Services*	\$ 22,635.13	\$ 16,513.25	\$ 13,899.41	\$ (2,613.84)
Council On Ministry	13,017.33	5,410.25	10,793.15	5,382.90
Missionary Soc.	25,083.33	4,879.83	3,114.70	(1,765.13)
Tract Council	12,142.17	4,750.00	2,929.71	(1,820.29)
Christian Edu.	9,676.67	4,470.33	2,042.57	(2,427.76)
Women's Soc.	3,116.67	2,475.00	5,024.33	2,549.33
Total	\$ 85,671.30	\$ 38,498.67	\$ 37,803.87	\$ (694.80)

* Includes: General Services, Building Operations Fund, Christian Social Action, 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	\$ (50,530.67)
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Morgan Shepard
Treasurer, SDB General Conference

Pastoral Changes

(since October 2007)

- Mel Stephan at Raritan Valley, NJ
- David Stall (assistant) at Berlin, NY
- Gene Hoose at Leonardsville/Brookfield, NY
- Haywood Floyd (assistant) at White Cloud, MI
- Wilford Beecher at Faith SDB Doniphan, MO
- Harold King at Colorado Springs, CO
- Keith McCall at Edgewater, FL (branch of Daytona Beach)

Obituaries

Lyons.— Neville George Lyons, 74, of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, died on January 1, 2008, in Toronto.

He was born in Jackson Town in Trelawny, Jamaica, in May 1933, the oldest son of Charles and Marion Lyons. Charles was an influential pastor-evangelist of the Seventh Day Baptist work in Jamaica.

Neville, known as “George,” graduated from Crandall High School in Kingston. In 1962, he married Evadney Bernard.

George worked for many years with the Jamaica postal service. He was involved in every facet of the Kingston SDB Church where he played the organ and piano. He also sang first tenor for the male quartet “The Mills Melodiers”—a group formed and coached by Rev. Neal D. Mills, a missionary to Jamaica from the United States.

After moving to Toronto in 1971, he immediately got involved with the group from which the First Seventh Day Baptist Church of Toronto emerged. Not surprisingly, Brother George became the music director and keyboardist of the church, positions he held up to the time of his sudden death.

George was also instrumental in reviving the male quartet, renamed the “King’s Melodiers,” with three of the original members. For many years he served on the Camp Planning and Executive Committees of the Allegheny Association of SDB Churches.

Survivors include his three sons, Fritz, Conlief, and Joseph; and two sisters, Joyce Lyons of Halifax, Nova Scotia, and Charlene Lyons of Toronto.

A memorial service was held on January 8, 2008, with Pastors Herlitz Condison, Joe A. Samuels, and David McLean officiating. Burial was in Pine Hills Cemetery, Toronto.

Burdick.— Merabah O. Burdick, 86, of Angelica, N.Y., died on May 10, 2008, at Highland Healthcare. She was born on September 19, 1921, in Lakewood, N.Y., the daughter of Axsell and Arvilla (Stukey) Olson.

On June 19, 1943, Merabah married Carrol T. Burdick in Alfred, N.Y. Carrol passed away in March 2007.

Merabah graduated from the last class of Alfred High School, and later graduated from Rochester Business Institute, Wellsville campus.

Following the close of the Independence, N.Y., Seventh Day Baptist Church in the 1970s, Merabah moved her membership to the SDB Church in Alfred Station, N.Y.

She was a loving foster parent for 15 years. In addition to playing the piano for several organizations, Merabah will be remembered for her knitting and crocheting skills. “Nana” made a special afghan for each of her great-grandchildren to treasure.

Survivors include one daughter, Dawn Miller of Angelica; one brother, Norman Olson of Gulf Breeze, Fla.; sisters-in-law Phyllis Mattison of Whitesville, N.Y., Myrtle Olson and Marie Olson of Lakeland, Fla.; three grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren. One brother, Kenneth Olson, preceded her in death.

A service was held on May 16, 2008, at the Brown and Powers Funeral Home in Angelica, with Rev. Kenneth Chroniger officiating. Burial was in the Until the Day Dawns Cemetery, Angelica.

Hays.— Linda Bingham Hays, 67, of Chatawa, Miss., died May 11, 2008, at Southwest Mississippi Regional Medical Center in McComb.

Linda was born June 27, 1940, in Janesville, Wis., to Charles Elton and Ruth Constance (Shaw) Bingham. She earned a Bachelor of Arts

degree from Milton (Wis.) College. She was a member of the Seventh Day Baptist Church in Chatawa, serving as church pianist and was a Sabbath School teacher and deaconess.

She and her husband (Jack Hays) and brother-in-law (Ralph Hays Sr.) were instrumental in starting a program of voluntary service for SDB young people which became the Summer Christian Service Corps. They also founded and operated for 30 years the Sunshine Mountain Home for handicapped persons at Chatawa.

Linda was preceded in death by her husband of 43 years, Jack Floyd Hays; one sister, Mary L. Briggs; and one brother, Charles E. Bingham.

Survivors include a son, Jack F. “Jay” Hays of Chatawa; two daughters, Jennifer L. Bond of Chatawa and Constance C. Warren of McComb; two sisters, Ruth C. Berger of Janesville, and Holly B. Alexander of Phoenix, Ariz.; one brother, Stephen B. Bingham of Alpine, Ariz.; and six grandchildren.

Memorial services were held May 17, 2008, at Graceway Church of the Nazarene in Summit, Miss., with Dr. David Smith officiating. Burial was in the Milton (Wis.) Cemetery.

Death Notice

Alfred (Al) Davis, 93, of Rochester, N.Y., died on May 28, 2008.

Thank you for keeping us informed of your family news.

You may e-mail updates to:
editor@seventhdaybaptist.org

Faith alive in India, *cont. from page 11*

ers. Rather, it is obedience to the Word of God. That Word says to those living in fear and darkness—and to those whose walk has been crippled by the Fall—to know that the King is looking to restore their inheritance and invite them to dine with Him in His palace.

Most of the women at their retreat lined up only for a blessing. A blessing means a lot to them for they believe it will bring all the other needs to pass. Some ladies did ask for healing and encouragement because of their call into ministry.

Approximately 30 healings took place on that morning, ranging from back to knee pain. Also, several deliverances took place. I was glad Becky and Darwin's calling is deliverance. They stepped in and brought deliver-

ance to one lady; in faith cleansed a home that the owner said had demonic visitations; and freed a baby from a spirit of fear. This was all done under the power of the Holy Spirit.

Darwin's eyes get watery when he recalls God using him to bless a child: "I raised my hand to begin praying, and even before I touched her she was on the floor, and I wondered, 'What happened? I didn't even touch her!'"

Chennai was blessed; blessings and prophecies were spoken into



Judith Houts blesses a long line of women at a retreat.

the air. Satan was mad and roaring like a lion, yet God was with us. Our prayer warriors all over the United States were praying day and night, and God won the battle and the victory is His! Glory be to God today, tomorrow, and always. **SR**

Retreat kept them in "stitches"

by Michele Markowski

Women of the Verona, N.Y., SDB Church joined together on the first weekend in May for their annual ladies retreat.

The weekend began at the fellowship hall on Friday evening. With several friends from other churches, we opened up with a game to get to know one another.

Asking questions, we filled in a chart comparing our similarities. After quite a few laughs (and surprises) we enjoyed a time of worship, praise songs and prayer. We incorporated banners that expressed "Joy," "Peace," "Love," "Jesus," "Hope," and more.

Afterward, some of us drove over to Bob and Ann Pangburn's house to sing praise songs. We wanted to encourage them because Bob had recently fallen, and that left him needing healing and care. This also kept Ann at home for the weekend. We missed you, Ann!

Sabbath morning: Delta Lake Bible Conference Center near Rome. A wonderful breakfast energized us for a day filled with worship, Bible study, fellowship, fun and games. After being assigned to groups of four or five (by the color on our nametags), our first study taught what the Bible says about unity.

Coming back together, each group shared what they learned. A short break was followed by music and testimonies, then lunch. Did I mention how good the food was?

At the second session, we talked about what

good relationships look like and chose skit ideas for the evening session.

Craft time consisted of making squares for a quilt we would sew together later. Each square was to depict the idea of unity. Our ladies are very creative! Look for the finished quilt at Conference this year in Kenosha, Wis.

We ended the evening by learning how to apply to our lives what the Bible tells us. And, how to make Christianity look beautiful to the world.

Then the skits! Again, the creativity flowed. Each skit showed how various problems in the church can be a stumbling block for growth and harmony. We came up with several Scriptural solutions following Christ's example.

Some were comedies, some were dramas, and the teen group even did a game show! Then we played some games, sang songs and hymns. We even went on a s'mores run to enjoy later by the fire.

On Sunday morning, we ended with a time of reflection and wrote blessings (based on Scripture) to share with each other.

I pray that what we learned about "unity in the Spirit through the bond of peace" will be evident in all of us. As you look at our quilt, let it remind you how each individual is unique, yet bound to one another, unified in one Spirit, in peace and harmony, forming one beautiful tapestry. Praise be to God! **SR**

KEVIN'S

ORNER

Open to change?

I had to smile when someone asked me, “So, anything special going on with you this year?”

Some big changes took place recently while I was out of town several days for a church visit.

Getting back late at night, I was greeted at home by a new office area. (We even did a close-your-eyes suspenseful “reveal” like on TV.)

Since Crystal moved out on her own (another big change), all of my office furniture left our bedroom and got placed into the newly-vacated, newly-painted room across the hall. Thanks, Janet and

Jackson! Now I’m settling in and rewiring my many computer and electronic devices.

And our bedroom? Talk about wide-open spaces! Jan painted a different color in there as well, brought in a big wooden headboard, rearranged the dressers and chair, and it’s like a whole new room. Nice change!

Anything else happening this summer?

Well, how about daughter Jenny’s wedding; our first grandbaby from Matt and Danielle; and General Conference being hosted in nearby Kenosha? Busy, busy times!

I know that many of you might have grown beyond these life experiences, but that doesn’t mean that you have to be “done” with the whole idea of change.

One definition I saw of openness to change is:

- a willingness to grow
- a distaste for ruts, and
- eagerly watching for a better view of what tomorrow brings.

This story comes from Clark Cothorn in Tecumseh, Michigan:

The U.S. standard railroad gauge (distance between rails) is four feet, eight-and-one-half inches.

Why such an odd number? Because that’s the way they built them in *England*, and American railroads were built by British expatriates.

Why did the English adopt that particular gauge? Because the people who built the pre-railroad *tramways* used that gauge.

They, in turn, were locked into that width because

the people who built tramways used the same standards they had used for building *wagons*—which were set on a gauge of four feet, eight-and-one-half inches.

And why were wagons built to that scale? Because with any other size, the wheels did not match the old *wheel ruts* on the roads.

So who built these old rutted roads?

The first long-distance highways in Europe were built by Imperial Rome for the benefit of their legions. The roads have been in use ever since. The ruts were first made by Roman war *chariots*. Four feet, eight-and-one-half inches was needed for a chariot to accommodate the back ends of two warhorses.

Maybe “that’s the way it’s always been” is not the great excuse some people believe it to be.

Many years ago, Grady Nutt told a story about a man who bought a new radio. When the man got it home, he placed the radio on top of the refrigerator, plugged it in, found the station for the Grand Ole Opry, and promptly pulled all the knobs off!

He had already tuned in to all he ever wanted or expected to hear.

Some lives and relationships get into ruts like this because we yield to the “Tyranny of the Inevitable”—the feeling of “what has been will still be.”

We need to stay open to newness and stay open to change.

What changes could you implement in your Bible reading or prayer time?

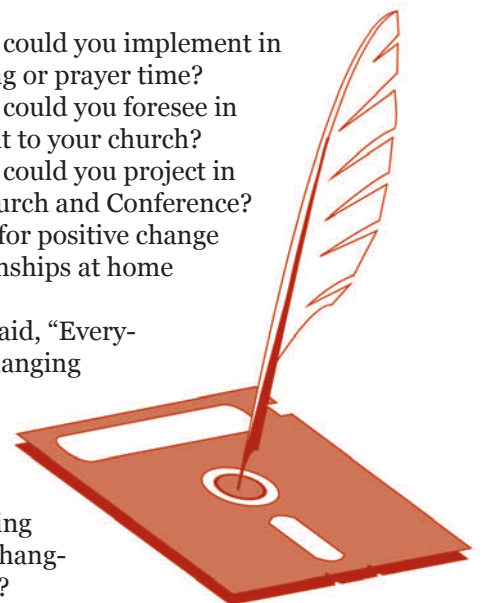
What changes could you foresee in your commitment to your church?

What changes could you project in giving to your church and Conference?

Is there room for positive change in certain relationships at home or at work?

Tolstoy once said, “Everybody thinks of changing humanity, and nobody thinks of changing himself.”

How about being a “nobody” and changing for the better?



General Conference

Carthage College, Kenosha, Wisconsin
August 3-9, 2008

Host Committee

Chairman—

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(608) 752-5055
mdshepard@
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Treasurer— Ron Ochs

Transportation— Jon Cruzan

Nursery— Linda Bentz

Exhibits— Janet Butler

Stage— Josh Harris

Publicity— Stephanie Sholtz

Please send all questions or requests to
registrar@seventhdaybaptist.org

Go to www.seventhdaybaptist.org for additional information



Carthage

Registration:

- On-line registration ended July 1.
- Paper forms can be found at the website, or in your May *SR*
- If you want to *e-mail* us the “fillable” pdf Registration form from the website, you need to first save it onto your computer, then fill it out, save it again, then send it to us.

Flights/Transportation:

If you are FLYING to Conference, book your flight into Chicago or Milwaukee, then take the **Coach USA** bus to Kenosha. The Host Committee will pick you up at the Kenosha bus terminal. A complete schedule can be found at www.coachusa.com.