

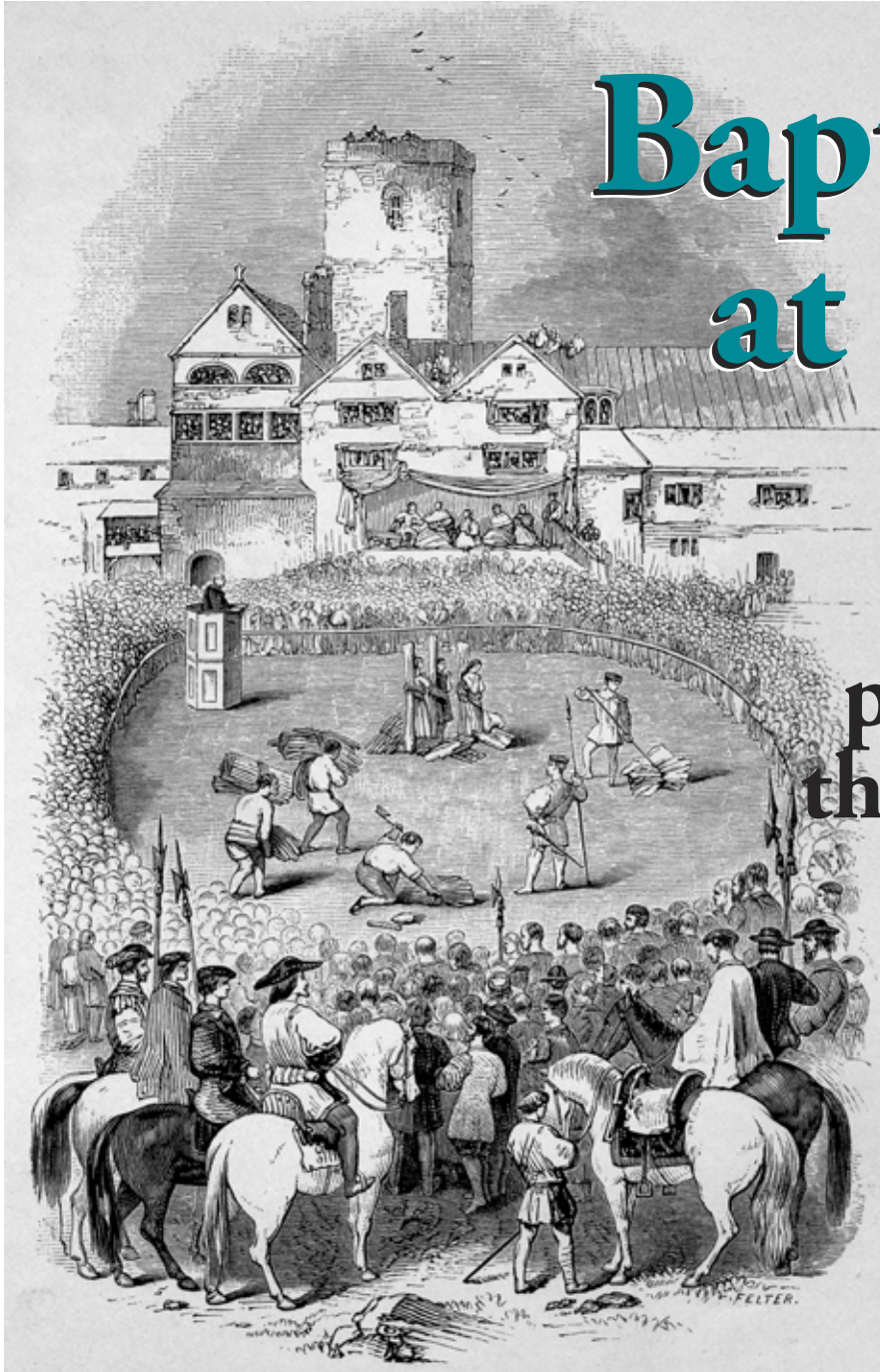
SR The Sabbath RECORDER

April 2009

News for and about Seventh Day Baptists

Baptists at 400

Or
do we
precede
the early
1600s?



The burning of Anne Askew at Smithfield



Who are Seventh Day Baptists?

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

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

The seventh day

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

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

SDB General Conference Lancaster Bible College, Lancaster, Pa. July 26–August 1, 2009

Accommodations

On-campus housing will be at a premium. Please consider the maximum number of people allowed per room when you register. (Forms will be in next month's *SR* and on-line.) Joining with family and friends will better utilize the available space. ALL BEDS are SINGLE BEDS. (See page 25 for linen information.)

The Host Committee will provide approximately 85 mattresses for use on the floor (saving you a couple dollars per night), on a first-come first-serve basis.

•Dorms (air-conditioned)

2 beds per room, with one on the floor
(3 max. per room)

Four rooms have 3 beds, with one on floor
(4 max. per room)

•Apartments (NOT air-conditioned; NO kitchen)

Three rooms—2 beds per room with one on floor;
additional area with three on the floor
(12 max. per apartment)

•Suites (air-conditioned, NO kitchen)

Four rooms—2 beds per room, with one on floor
One common/meeting/lounge area (w/ 3 on floor)
(Maximum per suite = 15 people)

•Handicap accessible

Four rooms, 2 beds with one on floor
(3 max. per room)
(Two handicap rooms can be accessed from a suite)

Off Campus housing

There are many hotels, motels, bed & breakfasts, and inns in the Lancaster area. A block of rooms has been reserved at a Days Inn about a mile from the college. Contact info: Days Inn, 1492 Lititz Pike, Lancaster PA 17601 Ph 717-293-8400. Rooms are being held until June 26 at a cost of \$71/nt.

Campgrounds

Many in the area; many already reserved. Hurry!

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See p. 25 for Reception information



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Ⓔ = Editor's Circle members

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On the cover: Some consider England's Anne Askew an early Baptist, predating John Smyth. Illustration by John D. Felter in Armitage's *History of the Baptists*.

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Historians: First Baptists began 400 years ago

by Ken Camp, Associated Baptist Press



“The Baptist movement began in a time of great political and religious turmoil, when individuals and churches were searching for the ultimate revelation.”—
Bill Leonard, Dean at Wake Forest Divinity School

Some Christians before 1609 held what many refer to as distinctively Baptist beliefs. Baptists in 1609 practiced believer’s baptism, but they didn’t immerse.

Even so, most church historians agree Baptists emerged as a distinct movement 400 years ago.

From their beginning, Baptists have been characterized by a restless pursuit of God’s truth, according to Bill Leonard.

“Historically, the Baptist movement began in a time of great political and religious turmoil, when individuals and churches were searching for the ultimate revelation. Many were willing to relinquish once-cherished beliefs and practices when convinced that a greater and more biblical truth had been discovered,” Leonard, dean at Wake Forest University Divinity School, wrote in *Baptist Ways: A History*.

“Such theological inquisitiveness led Baptist founder John Smyth to move from Anglicanism to Puritan Separatism in his quest for the true church. He then elected to administer believer’s baptism to himself—an act that marked the beginning of the Baptist movement.”

Some Baptists claim John the Baptist as their founder, an idea

that gained popularity among the Landmark Baptist movement of the 19th century but was not limited to it. Most historians highlight Smyth’s role in 1608-1609.

Smyth—a former Anglican priest—served as pastor of a Puritan Separatist congregation in Gainesborough, England. To escape persecution during the reign of King James, Smyth and his congregation fled in 1608 to Amsterdam. There they worshiped in a bake house owned by Menonites, a Dutch Anabaptist group.

Baptism for believers only, not infants

After a year or so, Smyth became convinced that the New Testament taught baptism for believers only, not infants. He baptized himself, disbanded the congregation and reconstituted the church as a gathered church of baptized believers—generally considered the first Baptist church.

Church historians disagree about how closely Baptists can link their heritage to the earlier Anabaptists.

“Whether Anabaptists were direct forebears of Baptists remains a subject of debate,” historical theologian William Brackney wrote in *A Genetic History of Baptist Thought*. “Historical scholarship in the past half century indicates that influences went both ways between Anabaptists and English Puritan Separatists, at least geographically.”

However, Brackney concluded, the exact degree of influence Anabaptist ideas had on what became the Baptist movement in England remains uncertain.

Leonard points to three distinct positions regarding the relationship between Baptists and Anabaptists.

“Successionists link Anabaptists and Baptists in direct lineage with little or no distinction between the two traditions. Others point to certain shared ideals joining the two groups in a ‘spiritual affinity,’” Leonard wrote, noting advocates of the spiritual kinship position point to commonly-held beliefs and practices shared by Dutch Mennonites and early English Baptists. “Still others have denied substantial Anabaptist impact on Baptist origins.”

Degrees of separation

Church historian Alan Lefever, director of the Texas Baptist Historical Collection, insists: “It’s a question of degrees of separation. Of course, there was some Anabaptist influence. After all, the church was formed in a Dutch Anabaptist bakery. But the fact remains, what emerged from that bakery in 1609 was unlike anything Anabaptists were before or after.”

William Estep, who taught church history for more than four decades at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, stressed the influence of Dutch Mennonites on the English Baptists. He noted the sharp break Smyth made with his Puritan past.



John Smyth, in 1609, became convinced that the New Testament taught baptism for believers only, not infants. He baptized himself, disbanded the congregation and reconstituted the church as a gathered church of baptized believers—generally considered the first Baptist church.

“Smyth... forsook the Calvinism characteristic of the Puritans and Separatists for a view of the Crucifixion that emphasized that Christ died for all in order that those who would trust him for salvation would be saved,” Estep wrote in *Why Baptists? A Study of Baptist Faith and Heritage*.

Smyth “adopted other Mennonite teachings as well,” such as advocating separation of church and state, and commitment to absolute religious liberty, Estep added. Ultimately, Smyth led his church to unite with the Waterlander Mennonite Church in Amsterdam.

But that move toward formal

union with the Mennonites led Thomas Helwys to part company with Smyth. Helwys returned to England with some other members of the Amsterdam church, and he established the first Baptist church in England, in Spitalfields, near London, in 1611—another key date in Baptist history.

“In clear contrast to the Mennonites, Helwys believed that a Christian could be a magistrate, take oaths and support ‘just war’ rather than pacifism,” Doug Weaver of Baylor University’s religion department wrote in his new book, *In Search of the New Testament Church: The Baptist Story*.

Two distinct Baptist groups emerged

By the mid-1600s, two distinct Baptist groups emerged in England. General Baptists could trace their origin to the Helwys congregation, and believed Christ died for all. Particular Baptists, true to their Calvinist Puritan roots, believed Christ died only for the elect.

“However, these two groups did not ‘divide,’” Leon McBeth wrote in *The Baptist Heritage: Four Centuries of Baptist Witness*. Rather, McBeth insisted, “they had quite different origins, at different times and places, and with different leaders.”

Traditionally, many historians have credited the Particular Baptists with reinstating the ancient practice of baptism by immersion around 1641. But like many aspects of Baptist history, some scholars dispute that assertion, pointing to evidence suggesting General Baptists immersed earlier than that date.

And to further complicate matters, some prominent Baptist scholars claim a direct Anabaptist influence on Particular Baptists.

Ethicist Glenn Stassen has pointed to striking similarities between the


Particular Baptist *First London Confession* of 1644 and Dutch Anabaptist leader Menno Simons' work, *The Foundation of Christian Doctrine*.

Even so, one common characteristic of both Particular Baptists and General Baptists in the 1600s was their insistence they were Baptist, not Anabaptist. The *First London Confession* begins by identifying it as the generally held beliefs of the churches "commonly (though falsely) called Anabaptists."

"Early Baptists claimed over and over again that they were not

One common characteristic of both Particular and General Baptists was their insistence they were Baptist, not Anabaptist.

Anabaptists," Weaver noted. "Mennonite distinctives—pacifism and the denial of church membership to a civil magistrate—never found a home in the fledgling Baptist movement.

"Some Anabaptist-Baptist influence was apparent, but a direct connection between English Separatism and the first Baptists—both General and Particular Baptists—seems the best way to explain the historical evidence." 

Ken Camp is the managing editor of the Texas Baptist Standard.

Who founded the Baptist movement—John Smyth or John the Baptist?

by Ken Camp, Associated Baptist Press

Baptists who celebrate the 400th birthday of their denomination in 2009 miss the mark by about 1600 years, some Baptists insist.

Since Jesus founded his Church during his earthly ministry and promised "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," so-called Landmark Baptists believe that means an unbroken line of church succession dating back to Christ's lifetime. And since John the Baptist immersed Jesus, the church Christ formed was a Baptist church, some add.

"Landmarkers believe that Jesus meant literally that his church would continue in an unbroken lineage until he returned," said John Penn, church history instructor at Missionary Baptist Seminary in Little Rock, Ark.

Landmark Baptists hold to their belief in church succession out of commitment to the veracity of Scripture and the claims of Christ, said Philip Bryan, president emeritus of Baptist Missionary Association Seminary in Jacksonville, Fla.

"The traditional Landmark Baptist position on the origin and continuation of the Lord's Church is essentially one of doctrine and theology rather than history," Bryan said.

Baptists in perpetuity

Landmarkers believe in the perpetuity of the church Christ instituted—"that there has never been a day since Christ founded his church when there was no scriptural church on earth, and that the church shall continue in existence until he comes again," he explained.

J.R. Graves spread Landmark Baptist teaching throughout the South and Southwest in the 1850s as editor of the *Tennessee Baptist*.

J.M. Pendleton perpetuated it for many generations through his *Church Manual*, a book still in print and sold by the Southern Baptist Convention's LifeWay Christian Stores.

In the mid-20th century, Joe T. Odle of Mississippi taught the same

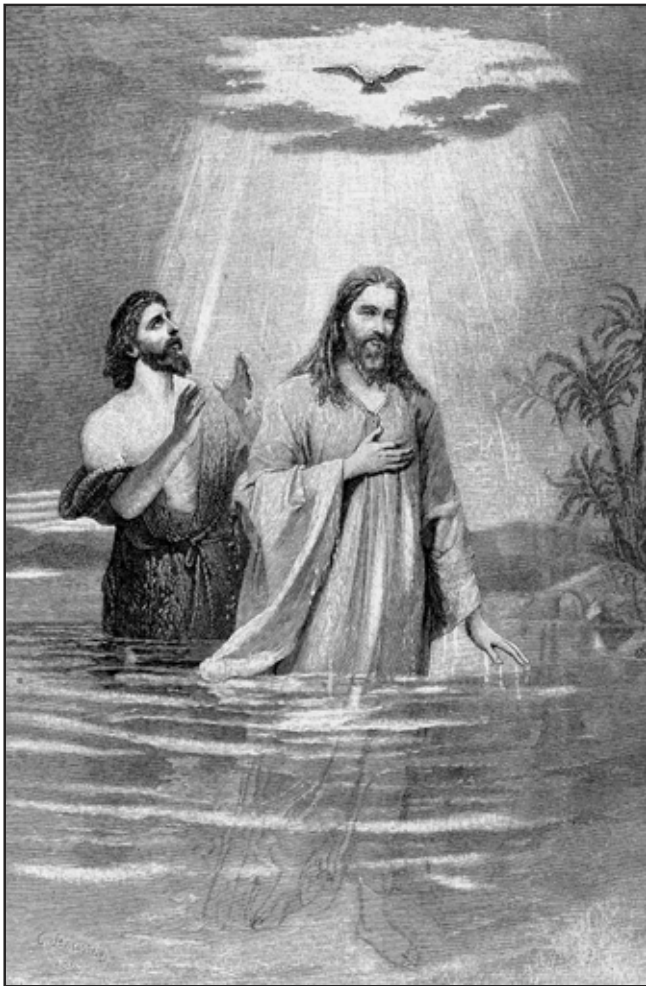
principles in his *Church Members Handbook*, a popular booklet published by Broadman Press and used in Baptist Training Union classes throughout the South.

"No man this side of Christ can be named as the founder of Baptists. Nor can any date this side of his personal ministry, nor any place outside of Palestine, be set for their beginning," Odle wrote.

The "Trail of Blood"

Many Landmark Baptists hold to the "Trail of Blood" teaching popularized by J.M. Carroll—the belief that persecution was the mark of the true church throughout Christian history. W.H. Whitsitt was forced to resign from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1899 for daring to contradict unbroken succession.

In addition to an unbroken line of succession back to New Testament times, Landmark Baptists also believe in the primacy of the local church as the only biblical mission-



ary-sending body, and in closed communion—limiting the Lord’s Supper just to Baptists or even to members of a specific Baptist congregation.

Landmarkers believe the true church that has existed since the time of Christ has not always borne the “Baptist” label, but it has exhibited certain distinguishing marks testifying to its validity. And for much of church history, one of those marks has been persecution.

The distinctive of persecution

“After the union of church and state, it is contrary to the teaching of Christ that any so-called church that enforced his teaching by perse-

cution—that is, by physical punishment, jailings and beatings—could be considered his true church,” Penn said.

“Landmarkers prefer to trace true succession through those groups who were persecuted than by those who inflicted physical suffering and death. These groups were not called Baptists, but they bore the burden of preaching the truth.”

Some of the dissenting Christians who were persecuted by the state church held “some strange or even heretical views,” Penn acknowledged.

“However, it is also to be observed that they had their books burned, their houses pillaged, their Bibles

confiscated and their children taken from them. Yet, in spite of this, they maintained a true witness,” he said. “These dissenters kept the faith and passed it on to us.”

Baptism by immersion

Some Landmark Baptist historians note that while modern Baptists certainly do not hold identical views to Novatians, Waldenses and other ancient Christian groups who rejected infant baptism, they also differ

Landmarkers believe in the perpetuity of the church Christ instituted—until he comes again.

significantly from early English Baptists, who did not practice baptism by immersion until about 1641.

“Assuming the validity of the Baptist belief that baptism by immersion is an absolute necessity for scriptural baptism, the accounts of the baptisms of John Smyth, the earliest Particular Baptists prior to the 1640s, and even of Roger Williams disqualify such people from originating or continuing Baptist churches,” Bryan said.

Gaps in the historical records require believers in any theory of Baptist origins to make a leap of faith, he insisted.

“We cannot show conclusively how modern Baptists sprang from the people who are usually believed to be the founders of the Baptist movement,” he said.

“Those people were about 1,600 years late.” **SR**

Our Tricentennial Year

Three Centuries of SDB Witness in Rural Rhode Island

by Vivian Looper

The First Seventh Day Baptist Church of Hopkinton in Ashaway, R.I., ended its 300th anniversary year by “Claiming the Heritage of Religious Freedom” on December 27, 2008.

Invitations were sent to elected officials, institutions that shared our Colonial roots, local churches, historical societies, and family associations. Letters and cards went out and posters were distributed throughout the area.

Several elected officials responded with citations and letters of congratulation. The most notable document arrived a few days after the celebration: greetings from President George W. and Laura Bush.

State Representative Brian Patrick Kennedy sponsored a resolution in the Rhode Island House of Representatives commemorating the 300th Anniversary. His attendance at the celebration was especially noteworthy. A beautifully framed Certificate of Recognition was also received from the SDB Historical Society.

Letters of congratulation reflected the depth and breadth of the church’s roots. These came from the neighboring Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church, Seventh Day Baptist officials, and daughter churches. Sisters from the Colonial days—First Baptist Church in America, Brown University, and Touro Synagogue in Newport, R.I.—also sent greetings. Representatives from the Synagogue attended the service. A local business



These tablets greeted worshipers as they entered.

with SDB roots, and historical and family associations were a part of the celebration as well.

Cars overflowed to the street from the full parking lot, and the historic sanctuary sheltered the crowd. Excitement and energy filled the air.

Tablets of the Ten Commandments from the first meetinghouse greeted the 110 worshipers as they entered. Church President Sandra Neugent welcomed members and guests. Linda Chaffee read a list of citations and greetings that had been received. Morgan Shepard brought greetings from the SDB

State Representative Brian Patrick Kennedy (l.) observes a commemorative stamping by Post Office employee Karen Campopiano.

Center in Janesville, Wis. Eric Fallon, president of the Pawcatuck SDB Church of Westerly, a daughter church, led the responsive reading.

Pastor C. Justin Camenga set a worshipful tone for the celebration which ended with the sharing of communion. The pewter communion set from the church at Meeting House Bridge in 1708 was used.

The pastor based his sermon on Deuteronomy 8:1-20, using events in the early establishment of our country as a backdrop for the religious freedom that we enjoy. The congregation was charged to diligently do their part to preserve that heritage

while looking to the future. Homework was assigned to print, read, and reflect on the article “Our Real Roots” by David Gillis.

The service included an area barbershop quartet, “Shades of Grey.” Attendees sang hymns heartily to the accompaniment of a brass quartet and organ. Sabbath School students



shared a verse and enjoyed a children's message by Marcia Hays.

The worship time ended with the distribution of an 80-page book commemorating the history and achievements of our church, the oldest continually worshipping Seventh Day Baptist church in America.

Fellowship continued in the parish house where Karen Campopiano of the Ashaway Post Office hand-stamped mail with the specially designed commemorative cancellation. Other activities of the afternoon included a luncheon (yes, there was sufficient food) and Pastor Camenga explained the meaning of communion to the children, using the pewter communion set.

Pastor Justin commented, "Jesus Christ's Great Commission is the reason for our continuous existence. Like those who now rest from their labors, we have our turn to communicate to future generations the imperishable hope, the incomparable way, the eternal truth, and the blessed life that is the Gospel's treasure.



The melodious and humorous quartet "Shades of Grey" added to the worship. Pastor Justin Camenga is in the background (right).

"As long as we are faithful, obedient and watchful, there will continue to be a Seventh Day Baptist church in Ashaway—not because of *our* history, but because of *His*."

As we look toward the future, we are thankful for the children and

young people of our church. But we also realize that we must make a conscious effort to reach the community so that in 50 or 100 years, should the Lord tarry, we will still be here at 8 Church Street in Ashaway, Rhode Island. **SR**



(petermweber.com)

Church Elder Kirk Looper helped to serve communion to the 110 congregants gathered.

Commendation to Linda Chaffee

The First Seventh Day Baptist Church of Hopkinton wishes to express love and gratitude to Linda Chaffee for her zeal and expertise in producing the book *First Seventh Day Baptist Church of Hopkinton in Ashaway, R.I.: Commemorating 300 Years of Continuous Worship, 1708-2008*.

With her encouragement and knowledge, the most recent 100 years of our history have been documented for future generations.

Linda spent untold hours writing letters, researching, consulting with the committee, preparing text, and applying graphic design necessary to produce an excellent history publication. Her desire was to leave a footprint for others. A job well done, Linda—Thank You!

Linda regularly attends the First SDB Church of Hopkinton and participates in the life of the church helping with programs for children and adults. She is a member and deaconess of the First Baptist Church of nearby Hope Valley. A former teacher, she now has time to research family history. She is a direct descendent of Jacob Babcock who was an active member of the church in the early 1700s. Linda is an archivist at the Babcock-Smith House Museum in Westerly, R.I.



Hebron celebrates 175 years

Story by Endeavor News, Emporium and Coudersport, Pa.
 Photos by Judy Gamon

It has been the site of life's greatest joys and deepest sorrows.

But on May 31, 2008, the First Seventh Day Baptist Church in the tiny Potter County village of Hebron, Pa., was filled with nostalgia and faith, as parishioners and well wishers came from miles around to celebrate the 175th anniversary of its founding.

"There must be something besides a good location, hard work, and a strong sense of community that keeps the church going," said the present pastor, JoAnne Burdick Kandel. "There must be the blessings of God.

"While there have been many challenges, sorrows and dark days for the church here, God's grace and His Holy Spirit has surely been shared with our church on the hill."

An afternoon-long program of praise, reminiscence, recognition of former pastors and longtime parishioners, as well as music and fellowship, followed the morning's worship service.

"This is a very special day in a very special place," declared longtime Hebron resident Bill Thompson, who now lives in Coudersport with his wife, Kathryn.

Roots of what would become Hebron's First SDB Church in 1833 were planted four years earlier when Clarke Crandall came to what would become Crandall Hill, with the intention of establishing a colony for the denomination.

The following year, a dozen men followed Crandall to the region from Alfred, N.Y., and began holding Sabbath services in homes in Hebron.

As part of the church's formation in 1833, a schoolhouse was built and



Just a portion of the members, family visitors and well wishers who attended the celebration at the landmark church in Hebron.

"God's grace and His Holy Spirit has surely been shared with our church on the hill."




Nonagenarian Rachel Kenyon was among Hebron's faithful parishioners who drew a special fulfillment from the 175th anniversary celebration.

used for worship services.

Today's church building was erected in 1889. In 1926, the Hebron Community Building—still in use today—was built as a joint project of the church's Ladies Aid Society and the Grange. An addition to the church last year accommodates a classroom, office, fully accessible bathroom, and indoor ramp.

Church historians have kept meticulous records, including a roster of 37 clergy members serving since 1836. Pastor Kandel was called to Hebron in 2005 as successor to the

late T. Lee Bennett, who served from 1999 to 2004.

Parishioners plan to continue living their faith during the anniversary year with donations to food pantries, visits to long-term care homes, family activities, and a community picnic and hymnsing in the Hebron Community Park, located across from the church. 

The 2009 Summer Christian Service Corps

Training will be held June 17-25 in Milton, Wis. Summer projects will run from June 25 to July 20, with the last week of the project served at General Conference. The SCSC Training Staff includes Steve Osborn, Helen Goodrich, Andrew Camenga, Kory Geske, Shirley Morgan, Vivian Looper, Faith Green and the SCSC Committee (Chair Linda Lawton, Cheri Appel, Janet Butler, Michelle Crandall).

Ashaway, RI

C. Justin Camenga, PD
Lance Greene
Josh Rankhorn

Battle Creek, MI

Jackie Geske, PD
Daniel Lovelace
Lena Parrish

Colton, CA

Sandy Lawson, PD
Mike Farrell
Katie Brown

Milton, WI

Nate Crandall, PD
Jasmine Patterson
Jackson Butler



North Loup/ Lincoln, NE

Heather Looper, PD
Jonathan Pradetto
Sarah Lawton

Paint Rock, AL

Ellen Griffin, PD
Melody Rankhorn
Jessica Patterson
Dorothy Noel

Seattle, WA

Ruth Burdick, PD
Katrina Goodrich
Jonathan Lawson

West Palm Beach, FL

Jasmine Lynch, PD
David Pottinger
Micayla Neher
Jessica Chroniger

Denominational Dateline

April 2009

2-4 NABWU Executive Board, Northbrook, Ill.—
Marjorie Jacob
4 Albion, Wis., SDB Church—Gordon Lawton
18 Hope Church, Philadelphia, Pa.—Lawton
18-19 Memorial Fund Trustees quarterly, Shiloh,
N.J.—Morgan Shepard, Rob Appel, Lawton
19 Board of Christian Education, Alfred Station,
N.Y.—Andrew Camenga, Kirk Looper
20 Lancaster (Pa.) Bible College—Shepard, Appel
21-25 SDB Pastors' Conference, Shiloh—Lawton,
Appel, Nick Kersten, Camenga
25-26 Missionary Society Quarterly meeting,
Ashaway, R.I.—Looper, Ron Elston

May

1-3 Allegheny Association, Alfred Station, N.Y.—
Appel, Ed Cruzan
2-3 Sabbath Recorder Committee, Metro Atlanta,
Ga.—Kevin Butler
4-7 Fundraising Seminar, Indianapolis, Ind.—
Shepard

15-17 Eastern Assoc., Washington, D.C.—Appel, Cruzan
16 Sabbath Renewal Day
16 CPR Team Training, Lincoln, Neb.—Butler,
Lawton
17 SDB Historical Society Annual Meeting, SDB
Center, Janesville—Kersten

June

5-7 SW Association, Houston, Texas—Appel
6 Church Anniversary, Dodge Center, Minn.—
Kersten
8-19 SDB History Summer Institute, Janesville—
Lawton, Kersten
17-25 SCSC Training, Milton, Wis.
27-29 Appalachian Assoc., Paint Rock, Ala.—Appel

July

21-22 CLT, Lancaster (Pa.) Bible College
22-24 General Council, Lancaster Bible College
25-26 Memorial Fund quarterly, Lancaster
26-1 General Conference, Lancaster



Financial Peace: Debt Snowball

by Morgan Shepard

*“Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?”
(Matthew 6:26)*

Last month we covered Step 1 from Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace University.® That first step is to build a \$1,000 emergency fund as fast as you can.

Now it’s time to take Step 2: Pay off all debt (except the house) utilizing the debt snowball!

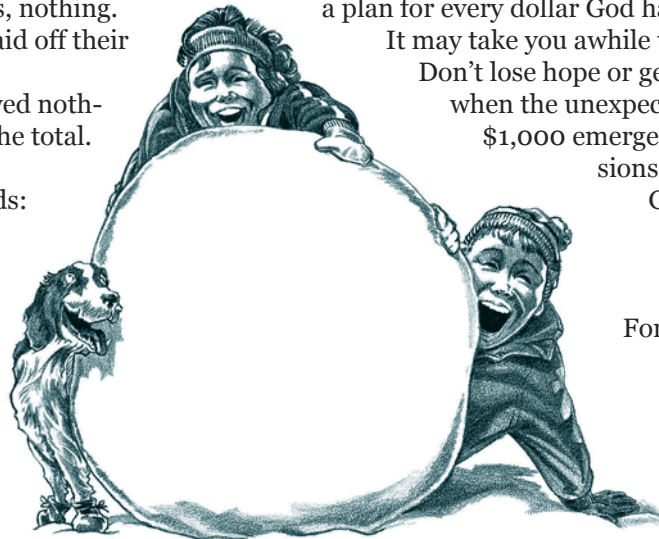
“But,” you might be saying, “Do you know how much debt I have? Do you know how long it would take to pay it off??” Probably not as long as you think.

The Federal Reserve Board conducts a comprehensive survey of consumer finances every three years. The latest survey (2007) paints an encouraging picture of consumer debt:

- 23.8% of American households have no credit cards at all—no bank cards, no retail cards, nothing.
- Another 31.2% of households paid off their most recent credit card bills in full.
- So together, households that owed nothing on credit cards equaled 55% of the total.

For those who do have credit cards:

- Only 29% of households owe \$1,000 or more on their cards
- 21% owe \$2,000 or more
- 6% owe \$8,000 or more
- 4% owe \$10,500 or more
- 1% owe \$21,400 or more



Chances are your credit card debt is under control, so instituting a “debt snowball” may be very doable. The concept is simple.

1) **List your debts** (except your house mortgage) in order from smallest to largest, regardless of interest rate, along with the minimum payment for each debt. This should include credit cards, school loans, car loans, etc.

2) **Make the minimum payment** for each debt except the smallest one. For the smallest debt, put all of your extra money toward that debt until it is paid off, then move on to the next one.


If you have done a simple budget you know where your dollars are going for expenses. Now is the time to put together a more detailed cash flow for each month. This should be a week-by-week listing of when bills are due and when you get paid. The cash flow plan should help ensure that you cover the four basic “walls” of your financial house:

***Shelter — Food —
Utilities — Transportation***

You may be earning enough to pay all your bills during the year, but is it coming in when you actually need it? There may be months where you earn more than you need. This is the time to make those extra payments to shrink your debt snowball! Remember, you need to make a plan for every dollar God has given you.

It may take you awhile to pay down your debt.

Don’t lose hope or get discouraged, especially when the unexpected occurs. You have that \$1,000 emergency fund for such occasions! If you remain faithful, God will faithfully supply all that you need.

For more tools and ideas, check out www.dave Ramsey.com. 



The Patchwork Quilt

by Leota Stevens

(Guest writer Leota Stevens attends the Riverside, Calif., SDB Church. She chairs a ministry that is restoring beauty and hope to the hearts of those who were affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.)

For weeks, my schedule had been set on breakneck speed. My world was rushed and crowded, and I had precious little energy to keep up with it all.

Personal devotion time was at a premium. Once again, the “tyranny of the urgent” had claimed me as its target.

Exhaustion caught up with me while making the bed early one morning. Too tired even to stand, I sat down on the edge of the bed and began to carefully smooth out the remaining wrinkles on our heirloom quilt.

The quilt had been willed to us by David's great-grandmother. I couldn't help but notice that its once-beautiful mauve color had faded to a dull pink. Here and there, loose threads had finally released their fragile grasp, exposing the white lining beneath the surface.

The longer I looked at our quilt, the more I noted its flaws. It wasn't exactly square on the corners anymore. In places the stitches were stressed beyond repair. The fabric itself seemed to be worn through from years of use. Where once it had been so smooth and flat, it now was blemished with lumps and wrinkles from the parade of generations.

At that moment I felt a definite kinship with that old quilt. Faded, falling apart at the seams, with oodles of lumps and wrinkles to spare! Gazing into any mirror left

me no doubt that the law of gravity was still in force.

I became painfully aware that I was dangerously close to slipping into the valley of depression, and I simply could not afford a trip to that dark place. Stinging tears, like a river in flood, coursed down my face and onto the aged quilt.

Oh Lord, please help me keep my mind on You. Things seem so difficult right now, but I need to see my circumstances through Your eyes, and not mine.

I collapsed on the bed and wept. The morning air was chilled, and soon I was shivering. I pulled the quilt over me and allowed its comfort to ease my body into rest.

My mind soon began to clear from its entanglement with my overly tired emotions. I looked at the quilt again and was impressed this time with what I saw.

The quilt was made up of a myriad of little pieces, and so was I. Through the years we had both survived with very few of those pieces missing.

The quilt—though not perfect—was made with tender love, great thought, and attention to detail. I too, according to God's Word, am fearfully and wonderfully made.

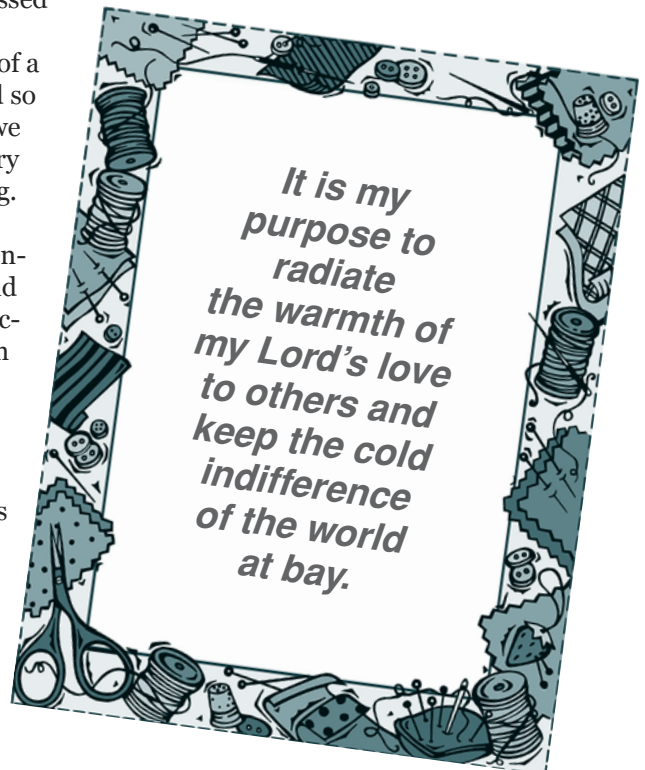
The quilt was made for beauty, warmth and comfort, and to meet the needs of others. It was created to stave off the chill of a winter's night, to offer protection for both young and old.

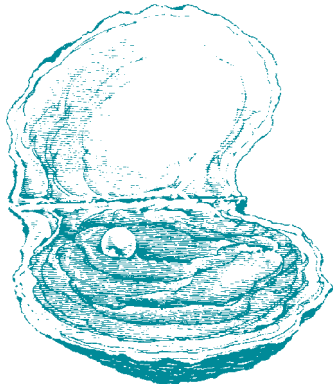
I also have been created for a life of

service to others. I was designed to bring the joy and beauty of Christ into my area of influence. It is my purpose to radiate the warmth of my Lord's love to others and keep the cold indifference of the world at bay.

Even with its lumps and wrinkles, that marvelous old quilt is still an item of charm and grace. It continues to grab the attention of any admirer and helps transport their imagination to a bygone era. The colors may be less prominent now, but its warmth is still intact. Whether new and wrinkle-free, or aged and worn, it still accomplishes the task for which it was created.

It is my fervent prayer that my life—like the quilt—will touch future generations, offering shelter from the storms of life to those who need spiritual and emotional comfort. **SR**





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

Hold Fast that Which Is Good

In an autobiographic sketch, Alexander Campbell (1801-1888) wrote:

“I had been a member of the Presbyterian Church nearly seven years, and a conscientious observer of Sunday as the Christian Sabbath during that time, not having in the least suspected that I was involved in a great error in regard to the matter.

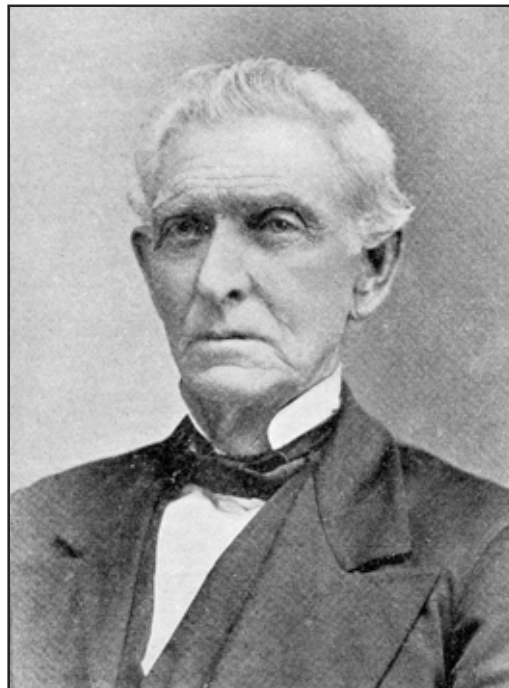
“In my 22nd year I chanced to hear a Saturday man was expected to preach on a certain evening some four miles distant. I supposed that the said Saturday man must be a Jew and as I never had seen any of that people we read about so much in the Bible, I had a strong desire to see a Jew. I walked four miles to the meeting more to see the man than anything else...

“I supposed that I would see a man whose appearance would be unlike our common American people. I soon noticed a man sitting by a stand with what appeared to be a Bible and a hymn book upon it. I was much disappointed in seeing a very good looking, middle aged man, solemn, dignified and somewhat winsome in his personal appearance.

“He soon commenced singing alone and he was one of the sweetest singers I ever heard; and what surprised me most was that he sang a Christian hymn. I now began to think he was a convert-

ed Jew. When through singing he knelt down and offered prayer—as he had appeared to sing in the spirit,

“I expected to find much about keeping Sunday in commemoration of the resurrection, but as I proceeded I found myself doomed to sad disappointment”



*Rev. Alexander Campbell
1801–1888*

so he prayed in the spirit and he preached the Gospel with soul moving and melting power.

“... I was convinced that whether Jew or Gentile, he was an able minister of the New Testament, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost. And though he said not a word about the Sabbath, Saturday would frequently come into my thoughts and I supposed that he honestly believed that there was some Scripture for the Sabbath instead of Sunday. I was decided at once to search the New Testament through and find, if I could, the Scripture on which he based his faith for Saturday keeping.

“I learned after the close of the service that my supposed Jew was a Seventh Day Baptist Missionary from Rhode Island, by the name of Russell Wells. I was now interested to know why Christians kept different days for the Sabbath.

“That there was much plain Scripture for keeping Sunday, I had no doubt, and therefore had no fears of having my conscience disturbed in regard to the matter... It was several months before I was through the four Gospels. By this time I was fully convinced that Christ and his disciples observed the Seventh Day, and I was very much disappointed in not finding any Scripture allusions to the change from the seventh to the first day as a Christian Sabbath after the coming resurrection or even when the resurrection was past.

“But yet I expected to find much in the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles to the Churches about keeping Sunday in commemo-

ration of the resurrection, but as I proceeded I found myself doomed to sad disappointment.”

After describing in detail more of his anguish and study, Campbell realized the change in his own life.

If you leave us, I see no other home for you except among Seventh Day Baptists, and they have no literary institution among them...

There was not a Sabbath keeper in the neighborhood. He was running a small store of dry goods and groceries, with six young men in his employment who would be affected by his decision to close on the Sabbath.

When he told them of his decision, one of them broke down weeping and said, “I will not leave you. I will stand by you and keep the day with you.” The five others followed.

The Presbyterian Church of which he had been a member appointed a committee to meet with Campbell to “reclaim him to Sunday keeping.” But after studying the Scriptures, they could find no Biblical basis for Sunday worship. Even the pastor admitted he could not find any basis for Sunday worship, and if his church would turn to keep the seventh day, he would, too. He added that “perhaps all Christians would keep the Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment in the coming Millennium.”

After these reports were made to the church, one of the members offered the following resolution:

Resolved that we fellowship Brother Campbell and allow him to answer his own conscience in keeping the Sabbath, assuring him of our brotherly love and confidence, requesting him to meet with us as often as convenient and especially on communion season.

The resolution was adopted without a dissenting voice. Accordingly he remained a member of that church for nearly two years as a Sabbatarian Presbyterian. He professed love for the church that was deeply encased in his heart.

A few years after Alexander Campbell’s acceptance of the Sabbath, he had a dramatic call to the ministry which was confirmed by the Presbyterian Church. His pastor informed him that his church, along with others of the Presbyterian order, stood ready to support him in a full literary and theological education, free of charge.

Greatly moved by this show of support, Campbell recalled, “But

there was the Sabbath, an insuperable barrier between us. One minister pleaded with me and tried hard to convince me that if I could dispense with keeping the seventh day, and keep Sunday as the one-seventh part of time, under the circumstances God would accept me.”

The minister then pointed out the opportunities which Campbell would have with large congregations, adequate support and opportunity to an extensive ministry. He ended with the statement, “If you leave us, I can see no other home for you except among the Seventh Day Baptists, and they have no literary institution among them, and they cannot offer you any encouraging prospect of usefulness. Now, how can you be conformed to shut yourself up among that ignorant people and abandon all hope of future usefulness?” **SR**

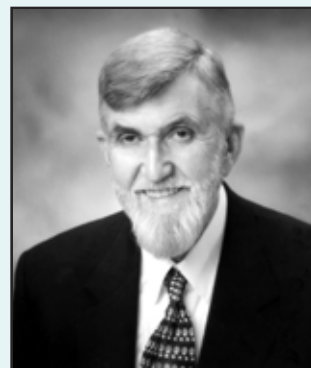
(A future Pearl will be devoted to the important ministry of Alexander Campbell among SDBs, particularly in his promotion of education.)

Stringer of Pearls: Rest in Peace

The Rev. Don A. Sanford met the ultimate Historian and Storyteller on March 13, 2009. Don’s obituary will appear next month.

As for his Pearls? Don worked ahead on stringing more entries to his long-running series, but that new material is limited. We are conversing with current Librarian-Historian Nick Kersten about options: running some old Pearls; Nick writing about new finds or twists on old stories; inviting local SDB church historians to submit their finds... Time will tell. It is my desire to continue having this historical section in the SR. We welcome your ideas.

In the meantime, goodbye Don. You will be missed.





Nominate a Good Sabbath School Teacher

The Sabbath School Committee of the Board of Christian Education invites your SDB church to nominate one Sabbath School teacher for the *Crystal Apple Award*.

The Board seeks nominees whose outstanding teaching skills have contributed to the Christian nurture of our people. Because only one person is selected, not everyone worthy of recognition will be identified and honored. Nevertheless, we seek to honor one teacher on behalf of the many who have shared Christ and His teachings.

Member and branch churches of the SDB General Conference USA and Canada, Ltd., may nominate a Sabbath School teacher.

Further information about the nominating procedure was mailed to your church at the end of March. The information is also posted at EducatingChristians.org/Information/CrystalAppleAward. **SR**

The **Nurture Series** is being revised and expanded. The new series will help students understand, experience, and be able to explain the Sabbath, our Mission & Ministry, and Seventh Day Baptist Distinctives.

Your donation will help us create this ministry tool. Please send your gift to PO Box 115, Alfred Station NY 14803, and make sure it is marked "Nurture Series." Or, send it online through the BCE webpage (educatingchristians.org/Donate/Donate).

Recipients of the Crystal Apple Award

- 2008** **Velma Taylor**
West Palm Beach, FL
- 2007** **Ed Cruzan**
White Cloud, MI
- 2006** **Wesley Greene**
Columbus, OH
- 2005** **James Goodrich**
North Loup, NE
- 2004** **Lucinda Snyder**
Alfred Station, NY
- 2003** **John W. Griffin**
Paint Rock, AL
- 2002** **Larry Bird**
Washington, D.C.
- 2001** **Judy Parrish**
Battle Creek, MI
- 2000** **Esther A. Burdick**
Waterford, CT
- 1999** **Marilyn Merchant**
Riverside, CA
- 1998** **Earl W. Hibbard**
Central Maryland
- 1997** **Janis M. Bond**
Shiloh, NJ
- 1996** **Karen S. Payne**
Dodge Center, MN
- 1995** **Madeline Fitz Randolph**
Boulder, CO
- 1994** **Alan R. Crouch**
Daytona Beach, FL
- 1993** **Dr. Lewis H.V. May**
Riverside, CA



Velma Taylor was presented the Crystal Apple Award at Conference last year.

- 1992** **Dan Richards**
Texarkana, AR
- 1991** **Ruth B. Bennett**
Battle Creek, MI
- 1990** **June Johnson**
Nortonville, KS
- 1989** **Helen K. Bond**
Columbus, OH
- 1988** **Margaret B. Allen**
Lost Creek, WV
- 1987** **Shirley S. Cargill**
North Loup, NE
- 1986** **George E. Parrish**
Battle Creek, MI



Educational plans for Malawi

by Kirk Looper

Education is something that we tend to take for granted. Just about everyone can get a basic education in North America if they want one. It may take longer for some, but most of us have the opportunity to continue on to higher levels if we want.

This is not the case in Malawi. There they have limited prospects for an education beyond the first eight years.

In Malawi the schooling is free for the first eight years of primary education, in all government schools. Those who choose to send their children to primary schools pay the required fees.

Once the pupils have completed eight years of primary education—whether they are selected to go to government or private secondary schools—they have to pay school fees. In some cases, this includes boarding costs. This secondary school education is equivalent to a high school in the U.S.

After secondary school education, they may be selected to go to a university or college to take courses like: engineering, accounting, business administration, law education, medicine, nursing, and others. Those who pass secondary school with high marks may be granted government scholarships to attend university, while the others are required to pay an annual fee.

One of our SDB ministers, Pastor Sulanis, has a son who falls under the category of students selected to attend a university, but has to pay the annual fees of \$750US.

Most children in Malawi manage to go through the free primary school education. After that they have to struggle to go to secondary school or above. As a result, once children are selected to go to secondary schools, instead of celebrating that their child has been chosen, parents get concerned about how they are going to raise funds for the fees.

When it comes to university education, very few are selected. The fees can be unaffordable to our pastors and many church members. However, once one is selected to go to a university or college, we at the Missionary

Society view it as an opening for that person to gain an opportunity that may have a lifetime impact on the student, as well as on his or her family.

We are in the process of raising funds to help Pastor Sulanis' son with his educational expenses, but feel that other pastors' children—as well as other SDB members—

are going to need funds in the future. At \$750 per year for four years, it is outside the possibilities of the pastors and laymen to furnish this assessment.

Not only do we wish to raise money for four years for Pastor Sulanis' son, but we would also like to start a fund from which the interest will be used to aid other SDBs to attend university.

We first thought that we should help only this one who is already in the university. But upon further consideration it was decided that a better plan would be to help as many as possible—with at least some of the expenses. That is why we are requesting funds to be collected and invested for future students.

It started a few years back when Pastor David and Bettie Pearson recommended a young man to the Missionary Society for aid in finishing his ministerial education. The young man's name was Mr. Fred Maduka. He graduated with honors and went on to serve the Conference in Malawi as a pastor. Now, Mr. Maduka sees a reason for helping others to gain what he has gained. He helped establish a financial program to help the youth in Malawi in their schooling.

It is our prayer that we can help Malawi build this program until it is able to bring in enough funds to make a difference in the future of their youth. When it is successful, we can then work toward a similar program in another Conference.

By working with one Conference at a time over a period of years, one can foresee many of the pastors in our sister Conferences and churches having an educational level equal to those of other denominations. Please pray for this project, and help these children in the ways that the Spirit leads. **SR**

Instead of celebrating that their child has been chosen to advance, parents get concerned about how they are going to raise funds for fees.



the BEACON

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

April 2009

Some Just Don't Care

by Christopher Davis, Marlboro, N.J.

Here in New Jersey, all high school juniors are required to take a giant standardized test called the “High School Proficiency Assessment,” or HSPA for short. It is a basic standardized test, with sections for writing, reading comprehension, grammar, and mathematics taken over a period of four school days.

A passing grade on the HSPA means getting a mere 40% of the questions correct. Those who try, pass; those who don't care, fail. That system was always fine with me.

Still, my high school has had a problem of maintaining sufficiently adequate grades for a number of years, so the state is intervening. The school district has created special classes for students who have failed the test (you *must* pass in order to graduate).

This year, all language arts and math classes are required to complete an independent “Ed Sol” program, as well as a mandatory “HSPA Prep” period during study hall. During HSPA Prep, all classes have been combined into one (like Honors and standard), and the “Ed Sol” curriculum is reinforced. Also, every class—including math, foreign languages, and science—is required to complete a certain number of writing prompts in order to boost the writing grades.

Juniors have not taken to these new policies very well. To say they



“loathe” it seems to be an understatement. Teachers aren't happy about doing the new programs either, and our constant complaining probably doesn't help. (One of my teachers threatened the entire class with a detention if there was one more HSPA Prep complaint.)

In the student's eyes, the programs aren't fulfilling their purpose, since only the students who are expected to pass anyway are just trying to improve. Most standard level students simply sit there and try to disrupt class in any way possible; not to mention that they never do the assigned work because it is not graded. Have you noticed I don't care for all these prep sessions?

How does this relate to us as Christians? Everyone is fine with life until something changes. God throws a “direction change” at us that we don't like. We try to rebel

against it, and end up failing, hoping for a second chance.

This reminds me of Jonah. He was a fine prophet until God put Ninevah in his path—a turn he certainly did not expect. He revolted and ran away, only to be swallowed by a fish.

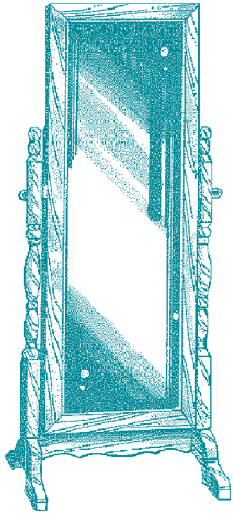
He was put back on the path God wanted him on (spat out, actually). He knew how God wanted him to live, but acted like a fool.

He recognized the goal God set for him. Still, he ran as far away from the goal as possible, like the students who refuse to do any work.

Jonah failed to realize that when he shunned the plan and did not succeed, he ended up having to do more work and complete the goal anyway. This is like the students who fail the HSPA and still have to take all the basic preparation classes in their senior year, as well as retake the test itself.

As Christians, we need to recognize the goals God has set for us, and do everything we can in order to complete that goal. Everything that could possibly help contribute to the success of that goal should be done with focus and determination.

Don't let yourself be sidetracked with foolish things, for they can only slow you down and give you more work. God gave us a mission, so we need to do it—and do it well. **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*

A Woman for All Seasons

Like many others, I complain about the weather. It's either too hot or too cold, too dry or too wet, too calm or too windy. I can even squawk that the clouds are too dense, the sun is too bright, and the moon isn't full enough.

Over the years, I've made it abundantly clear that I hate March weather in Wisconsin. And I'm not wild about the climate in January or February, either.

This past January, my son phoned from Florida, complaining about the cold. "It was 20 degrees this morning," he whined.

"Jay," I replied, trying real hard to suppress the disgust in my voice. "That's not cold. Yesterday the wind chill here was 45 degrees below zero. *That's cold!*"

I may grumble about the weather, yet I'm thankful for the seasons. Life on this emerald and azure sphere would be unbearably dull without the variations in heat and humidity, and the resulting landscapes: jungles and deserts, snow-capped mountains and lush valleys, desolate tundras and flowering meadows.

Occasionally, I even wax poetic about God's Gift of Seasons:

Summer is a lady wrapped in a green grass gown festooned with clover, clutching a bouquet of fragrant roses as she tiptoes through life in moss slippers. With a tiara of daisies

resting on her head, she shares a smile as warm as the sun itself.

Summer reigns over lazy days laced with **SUNLIGHT**, a mother reprimanding her brood to rest from the heat. But she also rules over raging thunderstorms—cauldrons of swirling clouds birthing expansive



rainbows that bridge the gap between summer and fall.

Lady Autumn is dressed in a shimmering gown of multi-colored leaves, wandering about in shoes **FASHIONED FROM** crushed acorns. Her tiara is woven from succulent grapevines, and she carries a cornucopia overflowing with the fruits of harvest. Her smile is like a roaring bonfire that warms the children while they sit on some pumpkins, mesmerized by the flames.

Autumn, who reigns over invigorating days perfumed with steaming cider, waits patiently for the inevitable frost that will glaze our windows with exquisite patterns.

Lady Winter is **A TALL**, elegant woman draped in a gown of shim-

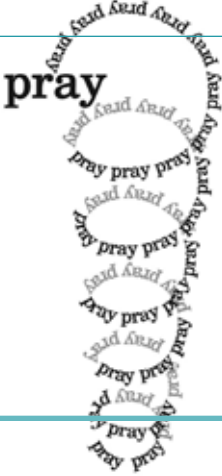
mering snowflakes. The shoes **THAT CRADLE HER FEET** are carved from Arctic ice as pure as God Himself. A crown of pungent pine needles nestles on her head, and a bouquet of greenery bejeweled with ruby-red holly berries cascades to the frozen earth.

Winter's smile acts like a blazing fireplace presiding over frigid days of long shadows and early darkness—a unique time for both man and beast to slow from **LIFE'S** frantic pace. At peace with the world, Winter bows before the Christ Child as she silently awaits the arrival of spring.

Lady Spring is an effervescent young girl who dances in circles, her gown of vibrant-colored wildflowers **WHIRLING** in the breeze. Daffodils and tulips eagerly push through the **RICH** soil, stretch their leaves heavenward, and kiss her bare feet as she flitters and floats about. Mourning doves drape invisible cooing ribbons among the locks of her flowing blonde hair, and her bright smile causes rivers to sparkle like liquid sequins.

The shawl of ever-warming air that shelters Spring's shoulders also incubates the new life that bursts forth from Creation—tender green shoots, featherless baby robins, wobbly-legged fawns. Her busy days bustle with rediscovered energy and promise, as gentle showers rinse away the residue of winter. Once again, Life begins anew.

Spring, Summer, Winter, Fall;
Thank You, Lord, for them All. **SR**



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

Lancaster (Pa.) Bible College



The President's Page
 by Ed Cruzan

Pray to Be Found Faithful

Listen to these words from Matthew 25—

“Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your Master’s happiness” (vv. 21, 23).

Now check out these words: “You wicked, lazy servant!” (v. 26).

Which words would you want to hear from the Master? I know which ones I want to hear!

My struggle with this passage has been, “What must we do to be found faithful?” In the next section of Matthew 25, we see six things the King looks for in a faithful servant:

- 1) **Feed** the hungry
- 2) **Give drink** to the thirsty
- 3) **House** the stranger
- 4) **Clothe** the naked
- 5) **Look after** the sick
- 6) **Visit** those in prison

Is that all there is to it? If you’re a Pharisee, then the answer is “yes”—just do what it says and you’ll be found “faithful.” If you’re a follower of Christ, there’s more to it.

Look at Hebrews 11 to see how those faithful servants got their names into the Book of Life. I was amazed to discover at least 40 different expressions of faith!

Again I ask, “What does the master look for in a faithful servant?” I have imagined what I would like to be doing when Christ returns. One of my proudest imaginations is me sitting in church, praying on a Sabbath morning.

However, many times I would be ashamed if Christ returned at a particular moment in my life because of my sinful attitude or conduct.

But all of this is far too capricious for the faithfulness of God. As usual, I’m looking at the *external*, when God looks at the heart. Isn’t it the heart that makes us Christians and not Pharisees? This is what Jesus tried to teach us: God looks at the heart!

So what makes us faithful? Our *relationship with God*—through the love of His Son Jesus Christ—makes us faithful. This is expressed with the love we have for God in our hearts.

What we do in faith is simply an expression of who we are in Christ. Our love for God (the expression of our heart) is demonstrated by what we do in and through Christ.

So, what’s the difference among the servants in Matthew 25? Listen to the initial response of the three servants when the Master appears.

The first two servants (found faithful) respond this way: “You entrusted me.” The third responds: “I knew you are a hard man.”

See the difference? Do you see what we must be personally praying for? The relationship that the servants have with the Master—in their hearts—determines their faithfulness.

The first two servants have a trusting relationship. They have faith in the Master! They see God working through them; they focus on His mercy and endeavor to please Him.

The third servant sees a god lord-ing over him; a god characterized by judgment and to be feared. The third servant does not have a relationship built on faith. This lack of faith produces nothing and results in the Master characterizing this man as “wicked and lazy.”

Brothers and sisters, how would you characterize your relationship with the Master? How will you respond when called to account by the Master when He returns?

Please join with me as we pray together that our faithful, heartfelt response will be, “Lord, you entrusted me.” Well done, good and faithful servant! **SR**



by Executive Director
Rob Appel

What's in a Name?

Many Baptist conferences, conventions, and local churches are dropping—our talking of dropping—the “Baptist” name from their identity.

This reflects a nationwide trend of moving away from denominational titles and identity. The change is apparently designed to distance the church from some negative connotations of the name “Baptist.”

Over the past few years there have been instances where the Baptist name has been tarnished. Because of these, now some non-Baptists tend to think of us as very narrow-minded, sometimes mean-spirited and self-righteous. In the Bible Belt, some think that all Baptists are members of hate groups.

I assert that we are running away from our identity and shying away from the fight to reclaim our good name. Now before you simply state, “Rob, you are wrong,” bear with me and read what I have to say.

By its most basic definition, a Baptist is a Christian who practices baptism by water immersion following a confession of faith in Jesus Christ. However, if our definition were that easy there would not be a need for dozens of distinct groups within the Baptist family.

Since Baptist churches traditionally are autonomous, a great variety exists from church to church and sometimes within the same church.

With all of this negative baggage thrust upon Baptists, some groups

are suggesting, “Why not drop the name Baptist, and take the name ‘Christian’? After all, Baptists are Christians and followers of Christ in the widest and deepest significance of the term.”

In my opinion the worst abused word in history is the term “Christian.” We should not lose our historic and characteristic identity as a people, nor sacrifice our specific mission for God’s truth and the good of the world. We would be doing that if we gave up our symbolic name for that of “Christian.”

Dropping our “Baptist” identity would be making a big mistake. For two reasons alone, we should not give up the name:

1. It is the name of our prototype, John the Baptist. He was the first Baptist.

We are called this due to the act of accepting Christ and the pronouncement John the Baptist administered to the followers of Jesus. This declaration was from heaven, and not from men nor from John. It was sent from God.

John the Baptist revealed the fundamental principles and practices which now distinguish Baptists from all other people. We can no more give up the name than give up the principles of our Baptist heritage.

2. Baptism is symbolic of the death, burial, and resurrection. It is the ideal of salvation by grace.

Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and rose again for our justification. When Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan, Jesus fulfilled “all righteousness” in the symbolic demonstration of this great three-fold fact in the work of our salvation.

Also, when we are baptized we are stating—through Jesus Christ—our death to sin, the burial of the old self, and our rebirth to a new life. We Baptists are a death, burial, and resurrection people!

Therefore it would be impossible for us to successfully sustain our historic and distinguishing attitude toward this Gospel ideal and give up the name “Baptist.”

It seems a shame that we can allow a few to smear the name of Baptist. I, for one, am not the kind to shy away from a challenge. I believe it is unconscionable for us to surrender the name.

Being “Baptist” properly distinguishes us from other groups that call themselves “Christian,” and yet who preach or practice in error.

When I think of what William Saller, Henry Jessey, Edward and Joseph Stennett, Francis Bampfield, Peter Chamberlen, John James, and Stephen and Ann Mumford all sacrificed for the early Seventh Day Baptists, I will be hard-pressed to surrender our name, our history, our identity, and our heritage—just because a few choose to dishonor the Baptist character. **SR**

One steep path after another

Bentzes to leave for mountainous Lesotho, Africa

by Beth Beyer, Student Voice Editor
MHSToday school newsletter, Milton, Wisconsin

Moving during high school is hard enough. If that's a scary thought, think about how hard it would be to move to Africa.

For freshman Patrick Bentz, that will happen in July. His dad went on a mission trip to the Philippines in 2005. Ever since, Patrick's family looked to find another place to do missionary work.

His family felt like they were being called into missions for a long time, and didn't know where to go. Bentz explained the decision-making process.

"We talked to people about Kenya, but then we heard about Africa Inland Missions and about the group 'Timo,'" Bentz said. "We're going to Lesotho. It's a very small country—smaller than Ohio. It's totally surrounded by South Africa."

African Inland Mission is an evangelical nondenominational missionary society. Timo puts a team of new missionaries with an experienced missionary couple who serve as team leaders. Together, they live as learners among an unreached or partially unreached people group with the same goal of sharing Christ.

In order to prepare to move into their new missionary country, Patrick and his family had to do a few things.

"We went right outside of New York City last July, to be interviewed by some people from the U.S. headquarters to see if we could go on the African Inland Missions."

His family will be doing different types of mission work while in Africa.



Patrick Bentz (third from left) is one high schooler about to make a big move. Along with brothers Charlie and Wesley, sister Ellen, and parents Mark and Linda, the Bentzes will head to Africa in July.

"My dad will be teaching and my mom will be assisting mid-wives," Bentz said. "They are geared toward helping and learning to be long-term missionaries."

Bentz will continue the rest of his high school career in Africa. It's not every day you hear about a freshman boy moving to Africa to do mission work.

"I feel sure about what I'm doing and confident. I really want to go, but I don't really want to leave... at all."

While Patrick's future in mission work is unknown, he speaks about one step towards the rest of his life after Africa.

"I'll come back to the states for college," Bentz said. 



The country of Lesotho, known as the "Mountain Kingdom," is totally surrounded by South Africa. The Drakensberg mountain range forms a natural border between Lesotho and South Africa.

Keeping it Simple in Battle Creek

by Nancy Makuch

Is anything simple in your life? Is balancing work and home and family needs ever simple? Probably not!

How “simple” is your church? Do you have programs or ministries that meet the needs and interests of every age group, gender, marital status, and major life event?

If yes, or if your church is working toward this goal, then I say, “Phew!” But how many programs can one congregation support successfully? At what point does shepherding people turn into just program managing?

The issues of time, energy and focus implied in these questions are fully addressed in the book *Simple*

Church by Thom S. Rainer and Eric Geiger. In their research, the authors visited and studied examples of both stagnant and growing churches in order to develop hunches on what key factors were related to church growth. Then they studied hundreds of churches, using a survey with questions related to these key factors.

Submitting their findings to statistical formulas, they found that there is a strong correlation between being simple and being effective in helping people and churches achieve growth. This is a “quality vs. quantity” approach to church planning.

Being “simple” as a church involves:

1) Having a **clarity of vision** about what is a disciple and what programs actually help people achieve spiritual maturity.

2) Defining a **process of movement** that will bring people through ever-increasing stages of commitment.

3) **Alignment** of all ministries, staff and members around the same concepts and processes.

4) **Focus**—evaluating all existing programs and future ones according to steps 1, 2 and 3.

This last stage is the most difficult, as programs may have to be trimmed. People can become offended or unsettled as “comfort zone traditions” give way to new, focused, disciple-making efforts.

The Battle Creek, Mich., Seventh Day Baptist Church is at the very beginning of this “simple” process. Many are reading the *Simple Church* book to prepare for upcoming sermons and discussion groups.

Step two is a survey that we are currently taking. The survey asks each of us to write down what traits we think define a disciple. The results will be presented to the diaconate, then shared with the congregation.

The Appalachian SDB Association has promoted the reading of this book to all their churches. Two of their Association churches have already begun implementing ideas they have developed through the book’s guidelines.

We plan on reporting on our progress throughout the year and encourage you to read up on being “simple” for yourselves. **SR**

Another yummy recipe for soup!



SR Women’s Page editor Susan Bond asked Donna Rogers of the Alfred Station, N.Y., SDB Church for this recipe. The church serves a Soup and Pie Supper twice a year, and Donna noted people scooped up 32 gallons of soup last November! Here’s one of their favorites:

Cheeseburger-n-Fries Soup

(makes 6+ servings)

1/2 lb. Ground beef
3/4 cup Chopped onion
3/4 cup Sliced carrots
3/4 cup Chopped celery
1 tsp. Dried basil
1 tsp. Dried parsley
4 Tbs. Margarine
3 cups Chicken broth
4 cups Diced potatoes
1/4 cup Flour
8 oz. Cubed Velveeta
1-1/2 cup Milk
3/4 tsp. Salt
Pepper to taste

Brown beef, drain and set aside. Saute onions, carrots and celery in 1 Tbs. margarine in a stock pot until carrots are tender. Add chicken broth, potatoes, and beef—bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer until potatoes are tender. In a small skillet, combine 3 Tbs. margarine and flour, cook to boiling, add to soup. Cook 2 minutes. Reduce heat to low. Add cheese, milk, salt and pepper. Cook until cheese melts, then serve.

Enjoy! It is rich, creamy and yum!!!

Marriage

Janisch - Starck.— Brian Janisch and Jackie Starck were united in marriage on March 15, 2008, at the Albion, WI, SDB Church, with Rev. Michael Burns officiating.

Births

Fb **Foster.**—A son, Carter Evan Foster, was born to Dr. Jeffrey and Caroll (van Dalen) Foster of Goshen, KY, on February 6, 2008.

Fb **Gada.**—A daughter, Kaitlyn Johanna Gada, was born to Tim and Maggie (Richardson) Gada of Spooner, WI, on December 4, 2008.

Fick.—A son, Seth William Fick, was born to William and Samantha (Tennyson) Fick of Battle Creek, MI, on January 5, 2009.

Dear Readers,

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

seventhdaybaptist.org

And now you can even send your items via “Sabbath Recorder” on the social network Facebook. The info marked **Fb** above came from Facebook.

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

Obituaries

McCrea.—D. Wesley McCrea, 76, of Wellsville, N.Y., died January 23, 2009, at Jones Memorial Hospital in Wellsville, after a long illness.

He was born in Richburg, N.Y., on July 25, 1932, the son of Lloyd and Winifred (Saunders) McCrea. He was a graduate of Richburg High School, Westbrook Academy (Olean, N.Y.), and Alfred (N.Y.) University. Wes served with the U.S. Air Force during the Korean Conflict. He married Suzanne Reitnauer in Hornell, N.Y., on November 25, 1973.

Wesley retired in 1992 from the chemistry department at Alfred State College.

He was a longtime member of the Richburg Seventh Day Baptist Church, where he served as an elder, deacon, and trustee. He was active in the denomination’s Senior Saints ministry, traveling to various areas to help rebuild homes, churches and camps.

He also served with the Allegany County chapter of the American Heart Association as fund chairman. Wes and his wife volunteered at the food pantry of the local Salvation Army Citadel, and he was a former member of the Richburg Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad.

Survivors include his wife, Suzanne, and several in-laws and nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by two brothers, Maurice McCrea and Robert Stohr.

Services were held at the Mulholland-Crowell Funeral Home in Wellsville on January 27, 2009. Pastor Kenneth Chroniger of the Alfred Station SDB Church officiated. Burial will be in Woodlawn Cemetery in Wellsville.

Cartwright.—Florence L. Cartwright, 92, formerly of Alfred, N.Y., passed away on February 12, 2009, at Boulevard Terrace Rehabilitation and Nursing

Home in Murfreesboro, Tenn., surrounded by family.

Florence was born April 21, 1916, in Buffalo, N.Y., to John and Louise (Zeigler) Walter. She was a 1934 graduate of Andover (N.Y.) Central School. She married Ernest L. Cartwright Sr. in 1935. He predeceased her in 1966.

For many years, Florence was a self-employed house painter and later worked as a custodian for Alfred University until retiring in 1978. She was an avid card player, puzzler, and loved gardening. But more than these, she was a loving wife, mother, and grandmother. She was a member of the Alfred Station (N.Y.) Seventh Day Baptist Church.

She is survived by two sons, Ernest L. “Roy” Cartwright Jr. of Arkport, N.Y., and Keith Cartwright of Elm Valley, N.Y.; one daughter, Nancy Harvey of LaVergne, Tenn.; eight grandchildren and several great- and great-great-grandchildren.

In addition to her husband, she was predeceased by two brothers, Ray and John Walter.

A funeral service was held on February 16, 2009, with Rev. Kenneth Chroniger of the Alfred Station SDB Church officiating. A private burial will take place in Maplewood Cemetery in Alfred Station.

Death Notices

Bonard A. Allen, 82, of Huntsville, AL, died on March 8, 2009.

Edith Barker, 84, of West-erly, RI, died on March 10, 2009, in Bradenton, FL.

Rev. Don A. Sanford, 83, of Milton, WI, died on March 13, 2009.

2009 SDB General Conference

Lancaster, Pa., Bible College

July 26–August 1, 2009

The **Host Committee** has been burning the midnight oil, making preparations. Some of our members have tirelessly subjected themselves to visiting establishments such as “Shady Maple” to ensure that the delectability of each buffet is worthy of our Conference goers. We’re even putting our children to work inspecting every ride at Dutch Wonderland so all the SDB youth have a great time there.

Lancaster Bible College has a beautiful campus located in the heart of Pennsylvania Dutch Country. Plan to come early and stay after—there’s plenty to see and do in the area. Check out www.padutchcountry.com.

Please see inside the front cover for important **Housing** information in Lancaster and at the college.

Here’s more of your Conference lowdown:

Transportation



The Committee will provide transportation from the Harrisburg (Pa.) Airport, and the Lancaster Amtrak and bus stations. Please contact Ward Bond at wdbond@rocketmail.com (ph. 856-451-5681), or Steve Moncrief at smoncrief@prodigy.net (ph. 856-455-4419) for assistance.

Linens on campus

Please note that the college does **NOT** supply linens for conferences. However, the Host Committee can obtain them for you. The cost will be \$25, and this includes 2 sheets, one pillow and pillowcase, and a light blanket. (This does *not* include towels.) Price without the blanket is \$15. After Conference, you may either keep the linens, or you can give them back to the Host Committee. The linens will be washed and donated to a charity.

Nursery

Volunteers are needed! If you can offer some of your time during the week to this valuable resource, please contact Dottie Cruzan at dottie.cruzan@gmail.com. Share your intention to share your attention today!



Receptions

Lancaster Bible College is graciously allowing us to do our own receptions (traditionally held after the close of evening worship each night). This will save the Conference a considerable amount of money.



Several church groups and individuals have offered their assistance with these receptions. We need to solidify the dates and confirm the extent of your commitment (i.e., whether you wish to host an evening by yourself, join with another church/group, or help with expenses and have the Host Committee supply the food).

The Committee has hot beverage urns, punch bowls, and drink fountains. Responsibilities would include making the drinks, providing the food, and doing a thorough clean-up.

If you are willing to sponsor an evening, please respond to Cathy Dixon at scd3@hotmail.com (or ph. 856-455-2071) by **May 1st**.

Children’s Conference

Charlotte Chroniger is looking for 4th through 8th grade children to play a musical instrument in a Children’s Conference Instrumental Group. Band members will be given one or two pieces to practice between now and July. At least one year of lessons is required.



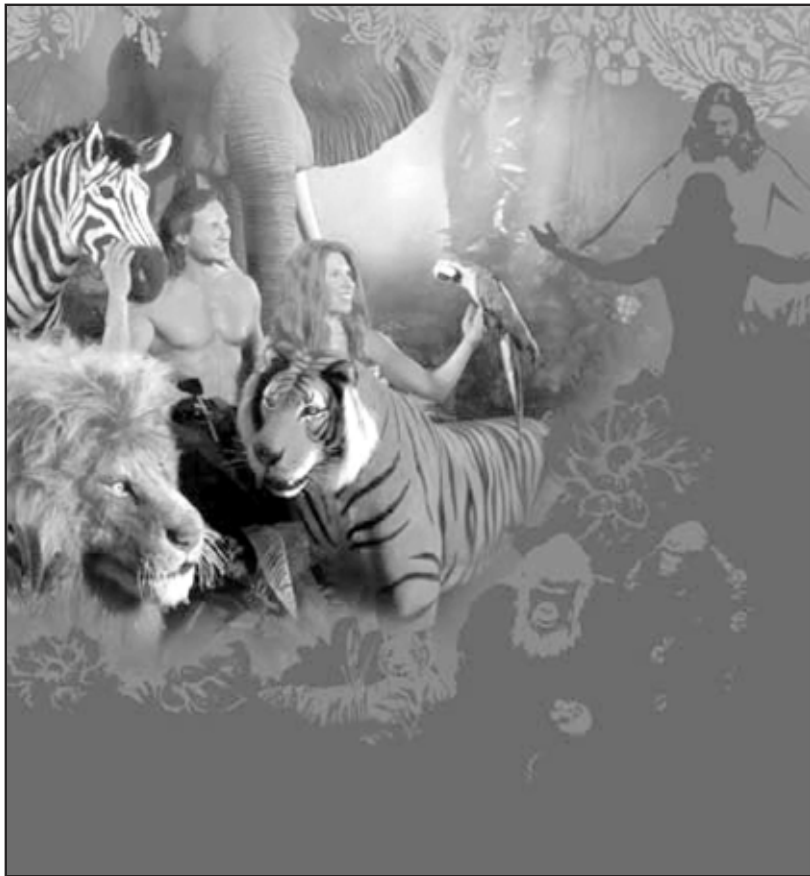
This is a great way to encourage our young SDBs to meet new friends and use their musical gifts to magnify the Lord. If interested, contact Charlotte at 856-455-0488.

The Host Committee can’t wait to see what the Lord has prepared for us when we all get together in Lancaster in July. Please **“PRAY”** for the Conference and for us.

We might prepare the beds for the week, but He has prepared a place for all of us! We might arrange the meals, but He invites us to the wedding feast as His bride. We might invite you to enjoy the local entertainment, but He invites you to live in paradise.

We PRAY that the Lord will work in us and through us. Above all, please PRAY that He is glorified in all things!

Miss the first Creation? See it again at Sight and Sound during Conference 2009



IN THE BEGINNING

Sight and Sound's epic musical brings Creation to life! Be there as God makes the heavens and the earth and all the extraordinary animals. Experience God's pleasure at His most awesome creation, Adam and Eve, and the complete beauty of their unbroken relationship with Him. Witness the fall of Adam and Eve and their glorious restoration. With spectacular special effects, *In the Beginning* promises to be an experience beyond your imagination! Enhanced by some magnificent staging, stirring musical compositions, and captivating live and animatronic animals, the stage will spring to life with the phenomenal story of Creation!

Sight and Sound Theatre is the largest faith-based live theater in America, located in Lancaster, Pa. It's about five miles from Lancaster Bible College, site of this year's SDB Conference. The Conference Host Committee is organizing a trip to see "*In the Beginning*" as one of the workshop options on Thursday afternoon, July 30. Individuals can purchase tickets directly from Sight and Sound, but there is a discount rate if tickets are obtained as a group. Show time is

1:00 to 3:30 pm and the discounted cost is \$44.65 for adults, \$28.00 for teens, and \$16.00 for children 4-12. The very popular shows usually sell out in advance. In order to assure seats, we must receive reservations and payment by **April 30**. For more information about Sight and Sound, go to www.sight-sound.com.

Please send this form (with your check made to "Conference Host Committee") to: Thomas Davis, Treasurer, 572 Jericho Road, Bridgeton NJ 08302.

Name _____

Number of Tickets:

Address _____

Adult _____ x \$44.65 each = \$ _____

Teen _____ x \$28.00 each = \$ _____

Number needing transportation to the Theatre: _____

Child _____ x \$16.00 each = \$ _____

You will pick up your tickets at the **Registration Desk** at Conference. Tell your friends about Sight and Sound!

TOTAL enclosed: \$ _____

KEVIN'S

ORNER

Are we more loyal to our toothpaste brand?

A new poll shows that Protestants in the United States are about as loyal to their brand of toothpaste as to their denomination. Wow. And I *could* have said the same about their toilet paper (but didn't like how that looked in the headline).

Bob Allen, senior writer for the Associated Baptist Press, delved into the meaning of this survey done by Ellison Research.

Churchgoers who attend worship at least once a month were asked which denomination they most often attended. The question went beyond broad terms like Baptist or

Methodist, and asked for specific groups like "Southern Baptist" or "Free Will Baptist." Then the respondents had to answer what role that denomination would play if they had to find a new church.

Here are the findings. Just 16% of the Protestants surveyed said that they are exclusively loyal to one denomination. Half of them (51%) *preferred* one denomination, but would "be open to another."

Now for the shocking comparison: 22% said that they would use only one brand of toothpaste, and 42% indicated a toothpaste preference for one brand while being "open to others."

Let's put this in a chart, and add more products:

"Product"	Strict Loyalty	Preferred but Open to Change
Denomination	16%	51%
Toothpaste	22%	42%
Bathroom tissue	19%	40%
Pain reliever	16%	42%
Soft drink	14%	56%

Ron Sellers, president of Ellison Research, said religious denominations face what most companies face in trying to develop brand loyalty—consumers have many different options and may not perceive strong differences among them.

"Church denominations certainly are not the same as hotels or soft drinks, but some of the same rules apply.

"The brands that develop stronger loyalty tend to do a better job of differentiating themselves from other brands and demonstrating key elements of the brand very clearly," Sellers said.

Bill Leonard, Dean of the Divinity School at Wake Forest University, called the research a "bizarre, yet telling illustration" of what scholars have known for many years.

"Fewer religious Americans think of their primary religious identity in terms of a denominational identity," Leonard said. "Loyalty to local congregations as the primary source of religious identity seems to be increasingly normative."

He added, "Many folks can switch denominations as readily as toothpaste, I suspect."

What kind of numbers would Seventh Day Baptists have under the "strict loyalty" column?

As Baptists who keep the Bible Sabbath, I'd say we have "differentiated" ourselves from other denominations. But are we instilling our distinctives to our own members?

When you or your children need to move away from one of our churches, do you look for the same "brand" near your new home? If the closest SDB church is miles (or states) away, do you take our brand with you?

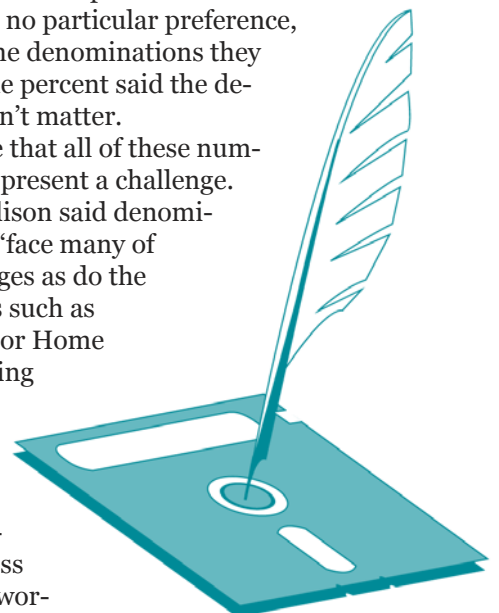
Bob Allen continues: People who worship at non-denominational churches showed a higher loyalty to remaining non-denominational than others show to their mother church.

Overall, 11% of Americans said that they have a small number of denominations they would consider, with no particular preference. Another 6% said they had no particular preference, but there are some denominations they would avoid. Nine percent said the denomination doesn't matter.

It seems to me that all of these numbers and choices present a challenge.

Researcher Ellison said denominational leaders "face many of the same challenges as do the leaders of brands such as Coke, Chevrolet, or Home Depot" in attracting worshippers.

Let's pray that we're not only pushing a product, but promoting the process of soul winning, worship and discipleship.





Important Memo:

165 Years and counting!!

**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



YES! *I want to celebrate 165 years of The Sabbath Recorder!*

- Enclosed is my GIFT for *The SR*
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