



The
Sabbath
RECORDER

Inside:

Congregation
and Campus
—
Church on Move

February 2011

News for and about Seventh Day Baptists

FASTING



*More than
saying 'No'
to food*



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

An important packet of information has been mailed out to each SDB church pastor, moderator and clerk.

The **Ad Hoc Committee for Denominational Restructuring** has prepared a draft copy of by-law changes needed to implement the recommendations approved at General Conference in Springfield, Mo., last July.

An e-copy of this packet can be obtained at our website: www.seventhdaybaptist.org in the "Resources" box.

The Committee asks you to review the material and be ready to discuss the proposed changes at Conference this year. Contact information for the Committee is found at the end of the packet.

2011 General Conference

"Living in the Fruit of the Spirit"

July 31 – August 6
Hope College, Holland, Michigan

Info websites: holland.org, hope.edu

Planes: into Grand Rapids (GRR)

Trains: into Holland (HOM)

Automobiles: Mapquest or GoogleMap
Hope College, MI

To volunteer:

berniewethington@hotmail.com

Wednesdays for Fasting and Prayer

Jesus said, "Go into all nations and make disciples." Are we reaching even our own nation?

This year General Conference passed an important recommendation. In response to the continuing interest and passion in church planting throughout the denomination, each Wednesday of this Conference year should be a day of fasting and prayer to seek God's guidance in this matter.

Each Wednesday will focus on:

- Prayer that the Holy Spirit would reveal to individuals His calling to plant churches in the United States and Canada, and for a willingness to respond to the call.
- Prayer that a training program for church planting and missions reveal itself, and for the funds and manpower to be raised to establish the program.
- Prayer for the Holy Spirit to reveal locations where plants and missions are needed.

Let's unify in prayer. Contact Katie Brown at cb15920@reddies.hsu.edu to commit 15 minutes of your day to prayer. Let's pray from 6:00 am Eastern time to 6:00 pm Pacific time for a renewed vision for our denomination in national missions!





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Features

- Why Fast?4**
by Dale Rood
Fasting from food (and other things) should motivate you to delight in the Lord.
- Focus on His presence (and not on the fasting).....6**
by Nate Crandall
When our focus during fasting is on the Lord, we can experience tremendous spiritual breakthrough.
- Update from Chaplain Johnson in Afghanistan.....8**
by Jerry Johnson
U.S. Army Chaplain provides the latest on his deployment.
- Congregation and Campus: A book review9**
by James A. Skaggs
Noted historian William Brackney includes SDBs in this narrative of Baptist institutions.

Departments

- | | |
|--|---|
| Alliance In Ministry 10 | The Beacon 18 |
| <i>A Church on the Move</i> | <i>Fundraising... and toilets</i> |
| Health & Fitness 12 | Reflections 19 |
| <i>Depression and emotional illness</i> | <i>A portrait of perseverance</i> |
| Women's Society 13 | President's Page 20 |
| <i>Content to be single</i> | <i>The Spirit of Kindness</i> |
| The Nick of Time 14 | Financial Faith 21 |
| <i>Ministry on the frontier (South Dakota)</i> | <i>The Good and Not-so-Good of Church Loans</i> |
| Seminarian Profile 15 | Local news 22-23 |
| <i>Dustin Mackintosh</i> | <i>St. Albans, NY</i> |
| Christian Education 16 | <i>Shiloh, NJ</i> |
| <i>Nominate an outstanding teacher</i> | Family flux 24-25 |
| Focus on Missions 17 | <i>New members, Births</i> |
| <i>Malawi: A call for help</i> | <i>Marriages, Obituaries</i> |
| | Kevin's Korner 27 |
| | <i>Look at how much I saved</i> |

Why Fast?

by Pastor Dale Rood

Fasting is defined simply as “to abstain from food.”

Some people fast for the purpose of reducing weight. Others have a hard time eating “just a little,” so they choose to fast, eating almost nothing for a period of time.

Sometimes fasting is done in order to clear your body’s systems of toxins and poisons. Indeed, on about the third day of fasting, one becomes more clearheaded and has a sense of well-being that would indicate something has been purged out of their body.

And now most recently I read that fasting shows significant promise for lengthening one’s life. New research is discovering that if you withhold food from an animal periodically, it lives longer, aging more slowly.

A spiritual discipline

While there are benefits to each of these, they are not the reasons for fasting that I want to focus on. For Christians, fasting is a spiritual discipline that—when used rightly—has an impact on our spiritual lives and spiritual sensitivity.

It is a means of bringing our physical self (what the Apostle Paul calls the flesh) into subjection to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. He says in 1 Corinthians 9:26-27, “Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.”

It’s easy to become careless or lackadaisical in our Christian walk, to let other things interfere, to let our passion fade away—to fall into the “only on a Sabbath morning” sort of Christianity. If the Apostle Paul had to fight against this, how much more do we need to do so? Fasting is a means of bringing our body into subjection.

“But I like to eat”

Very few of us do not enjoy eating. It is one of my favorite activities. I look forward to my next meal almost all the time.

For this reason I like to fast once a week, from bedtime to supper the next day, just to remind myself of my true priorities. I like the way Bible teach Derek Prince put it: “I don’t let my body tell me what to do. I tell my body what to do.”

I don’t want to make eating non-enjoyable, but I do want to remind myself that “eating isn’t everything” by choosing not to eat for a period of time. I want to show my body who is boss.

And if I can bring my body into subjection, it becomes much more realistically possible to submit all aspects of my life to the One who is my Lord—namely the Lord Jesus Christ.

More serious fasts

From time to time it may be necessary to do some more serious fasting, covering a period of two or more days. When you do this more serious fast, be sure to drink plenty of water. (These are times when we need to more clearly discern the will

of the Lord, or to overcome spiritual hindrances that have impeded our hearing from the Lord.)

On some occasions I have fasted during Conference week, out of concern for issues that have come before the delegates. My focus was for a resolution of these issues in accordance with God’s will. I not only wanted the Conference to make the right decision, but I wanted to personally recognize His will in the matter, in order to pray aright.

On these occasions it was difficult for me to decide to fast. Not only did I give up eating, but I had also purchased a meal ticket. That meant I was giving up meals I had already paid for!

At one Conference however, a teenager from my church wanted to be there so badly she scraped together enough money for travel costs, but didn’t have enough for meals. I was able to let her use my meal ticket while I fasted.

Oddly enough I can’t remember the “important matter” moving me to fast, but being able to bless this young lady continues to bring joy to my heart even today. In like manner, you may find some surprise blessings in your fasting.

Heavy issues and discerning His leading

Then there are the real heavy issues—major decisions where you need to discern the right leading of the Lord. While I have never done this myself, I have known Christians who have gone on fasts for 21 days or longer.

When you do this sort of fast,

you should not maintain your normal level of physical activity. Again you should not abstain from water. Such a lengthy time of fasting needs to be a period when necessary activity is reduced to a minimum and you can devote your energy to quietly waiting on the Lord.

This is a time for enjoying the presence of God. Psalm 16:11 says, "In your presence is fullness of joy." While you may be seeking an answer to an issue facing you, your focus in this time is not to find the answer, but rather to enjoy being in His presence.

Let God surprise you with the answer. Indeed it may not come during the period of fasting at all, but may come later. Your fasting, however, will help prepare you to recognize the answer when it does come, and to be satisfied with the answer you get. But remember, your focus in the time of fasting is to be able to delight in the Lord.

What fasting is not

Let me mention some things that fasting is not. Fasting is not a "hunger strike." You are not trying to *coerce* God or anyone else to do things the way you think they should be done. Someone on a hunger strike is trying to manipulate others to do what he may selfishly want. This is never appropriate.

Fasting is not a way to impress others with your spirituality. Jesus addressed this specifically in Matthew 6:16-18 when he roundly condemned those who fasted in order to obtain the glory of men.

Let your fasting be done in secret, with perhaps only a few close spiritual associates aware of what you are doing. But don't be ashamed to admit your fast to others if they should inquire about it. In such cases, focus on the purpose of your fast; what it is you are wanting God to do in your life through your fast. The key is to deflect glory to God that the honor might go to Him and not to yourself.

It's not just about food

While the definition of fasting is to abstain from food, I like to expand it to include abstaining for a time from other things in your life that may consume you. You may fast from watching television for a period of time. Or you may abstain from playing golf for a period of time, or from sexual intercourse with your spouse if you are married, or from shopping at the mall.

Fasting could also be a matter of abstaining from a few limited foods.

When I was in SCSC many years ago, I learned from Pastor Ralph Hays about a juice fast. This was not abstaining from juice, but rather abstaining from everything *but* juice. Even the old Roman Catholic practice of eating only fish on Friday is a form of a fast.

Key to fasting is not the abstaining from food, but the manner in which the abstaining assists you in seeking God. I regard the ordinary hunger pains in my short fasts as calls to prayer during that time. I will seek God for how He wants me to pray when I feel a hunger pang.

Finally, fasting should not be a sorrowful time. Jesus introduced a new dimension into fasting when he talked about it: JOY. Make it a time to delight in the Lord. **SR**

Rev. Dale Rood retired last year as pastor of the Dodge Center, Minn., SDB Church.



***Fasting is a time to delight in the Lord
and not to force His hand***

Focus on His Presence (and not on the fasting)

by Pastor Nate Crandall

Fasting is not all it's cracked up to be.

There is no mystical or magical pipeline to God's grace that is created by fasting. Fasting is not a "silver bullet" for spiritual breakthrough.

It is frankly an inglorious road of saying "No" to the desires of the flesh, and "Yes" to our hunger for the Lord. As such, fasting is a tool that can be very effective for spiritual advancement when properly used.

That's why it can be so exciting. The end goal for fasting is *Jesus*. Many people get caught on the rabbit trail of focusing on the *act* of fasting itself. Yet, when hunger for the Lord

is what drives the desire to fast, the results can be supernatural.

High school: When can we eat again??

My experience with fasting stems from many different contexts. The first time I began to fast was during high school through the "30-Hour Famine"—or what they used to call the "Planned Fast" back in the day.

Thirty hours of fasting seemed like an eternity as a high school student. The purpose of the fast was to raise money and awareness about the ravages of hunger around the world, and that was a good thing.

For the most part, however, our focus as teenagers seemed to be more

on *when we could eat again*, rather than on identifying with those who were really starving. Still, it was a good launching pad to further explore what the purpose of fasting was in my life.

College: What about long-term?

After several years of fasting one day a year during the Planned Fast, I experienced a radical shift in the length of time and the focus of my fasting. During college, I led a prayer group whose purpose was to passionately petition God for spiritual revival on our campus.

We spent many hours praying for spiritual breakthrough, and

for students and faculty to come to a saving relationship with Christ. As part of that pursuit, our group began to fast—often for days at a time. We operated with the understanding that greater amounts of fasting would bring greater spiritual breakthrough.

Our group certainly saw spiritual breakthroughs in many ways; however, we were hampered by a lack of long-term spiritual perspective. Our pace of fasting was not sustainable, but I believe the Lord honored our passionate pursuit of His glory.

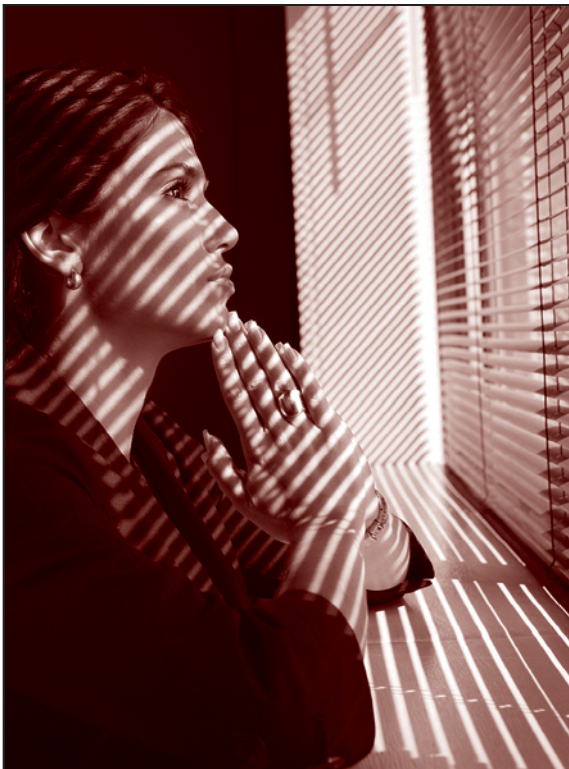
I learned a great deal during that time about how to deny my physical desires. What I didn't have yet was the wisdom to apply fasting to life in different contexts.

Seminary: Consistent in prayer

The next stage of my experience was during seminary when I was exposed to a model of sustained fasting and sought to emulate it. Fasting one day per week for the purpose of intercessory prayer became a way of life.

The areas of my focus in intercessory prayer included missions, unity in the greater body of Christ, and for the spiritual life and health of my local congregation. The Lord again honored this commitment—not with the same type of breakthrough results—but with consistency in prayer.

Dedicated, consistent and engaging prayer is a spiritual foundation on which every follower of Christ needs to build. For me, the spiritual discipline of fasting on a regular basis served as one catalyst to incorporate a consistent prayer pattern.



Not a “trick” or an idol

As my life and ministry has gone through several changes during the 15 years since seminary, my focus on fasting one day a week has also changed.

Rather than continue to fast once a week, I’ve gone on extended periods of fasting for the purpose of seeking God’s will, or praying for a specific spiritual breakthrough. I’ve also gone on extended periods of *not* fasting in order to wait for His leadership in fasting, rather than falling into the temptation of pursuing my own agenda.

I have not wanted fasting to become an idol or some kind of “trick” for the Lord to respond to. That was the problem spoken of in Isaiah 58:3 when it says, “Why have we fasted,’ they say, ‘and You have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and You have not noticed?’” Their problem was that they continued to mistreat each other during their times of fasting. They showed by their actions that they misunderstood the purpose for their fast.

Not “business as usual”

Thinking about my experience over the past 25 years, I realize that the purpose for fasting is absolutely crucial to understand. Fasting combined with prayer is a kind of declaration that we are entering into a time that is not “business as usual.”

There is a sense of urgency when fasting is added to the life of prayer. It is an added intensity that is sometimes necessary for spiritual breakthrough.

Jesus commented that a certain kind of demon can be cast out only through prayer and fasting (see Mark 9:29). We can easily see that something extra is needed in order to bring about physical breakthroughs.

For instance, in order to reduce their “personal best” times, athletes

must increase or modify their training. In order for a business to compete in a tough market, they must streamline their processes and become creative in how to do more with less.

Spiritual breakthroughs often operate in the same manner, and fasting is one tool that is used to push for those breakthroughs.

Feast on His Presence

There is a problem, however, when the act of fasting becomes “business as usual.” Regardless

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”

of how often a person fasts, if our approach in fasting is to see the act itself as the end goal, then we have misunderstood its purpose. If we slip into thinking that if we fast, God *has to do* what we ask, then we have shifted off the narrow way.

The disciples could not fast while Jesus was with them because they were “feasting” on His presence. After Jesus left the earth, they began to fast because of the “hunger” for His presence and for what only He could do.

We also should fast with the goal of feasting on His presence. When we fast as a matter of course, or as one of the spiritual things we do, we are in danger of substituting

“religious activity” for His presence. When our focus during fasting is on the Lord, and drawing close to Him is our goal, we can experience tremendous spiritual breakthrough.

Year of “Intensity”

I don’t think it’s an earth-shattering statement to say that we need spiritual breakthrough in our country this year. It seems like everywhere you look there are challenges in advancing the Kingdom of God.

Although I’ve not been led to fast very much even in the past couple of years, my spirit is heavy with the realization that fasting will be much more a part of the life and ministry of God’s people in 2011. It won’t be “business as usual,” and fasting will be a part of that.

A couple of months ago I began receiving the word “Intensity” from the Lord concerning this year, and I’ve since been hearing that others have heard that from Him as well. There is a time for a spiritual push, and I sense that we are entering into that period of time.

As we fast, let us understand that *Jesus* is the goal, and *fasting* is not. Fasting is simply a tool that can be used to turn from our sinful desires, and stoke the fires of our hunger for God. It is not the only tool in our spiritual tool-belt. It is not the “miracle tool” that will solve every problem, but it can be very effective.

Let us pray in faith and be encouraged because God is mighty to act in our lives and in our corner of the world in supernatural ways. JESUS is the end goal of the Church! May our hunger for Him continue to grow. **SR**

Rev. Nate Crandall is Associate Pastor at the SDB Church in Milton, Wis.

Update from Chaplain Johnson in Afghanistan

by Jerry Johnson

U.S. Army Chaplain Jerry Johnson is again deployed to Afghanistan. He provided this recent update in mid-January.

Hello everyone back home,

Well, it has been awhile since I have written. I guess there are two reasons.

For one, I am not traveling, so the routine is the same, at least in general.

Two, I have been busy with the World Religions class (four nights a week for four weeks). Doing that on top of the special holiday activities and the other programs we do has taxed me physically to the max.

Moreover, we have been starting to train for the Half-Marathon. To that end I am running 20-25 miles a week, including the long workout of escalating increments. We started at 6 miles, then 7; 8 this week, 9 next week, 10 toward the end of January, then go 5 to 12 miles. At 6,700 feet above sea level it's important to learn how to deal with the rocks and thin air. Right now I can do about an 8:30 pace for the long distances.

In the attached photo I had a triple layer on because the windchill was in the upper teens. At least the sun has been out, and there has been no snow except for a few flurries.

The class was a highlight of the deployment so far, with 24 students. I have to finish grading the final project that was the same for everyone: "Compare and Contrast Judaism, Christianity and Islam" using the 10-point outline I gave them.

The results have turned out nicely so far. They also had to do a paper or PowerPoint on a topic of their choice. I had someone do Wicca, another do Pagan religion, a Mother Teresa, Billy Graham, Gandhi—you get the picture.

So from the two classes to this point I will have an archive of material, and so will the students. They are each getting a CD of the projects. The next group starts soon, but only two nights a week for eight weeks. And right now we're looking at about 10 students—very manageable.

Our unit is doing very well, although some of the companies have minor issues involving the junior officers and some of the younger soldiers that the First Sergeants are having to sort out.

Today marks 90 days in theater, the one-quarter pole, which means that the first group has returned from R&R and another is set to take off. I did the family reintegration thing with a group of about 40; in less than five months it will be my turn to go through them.

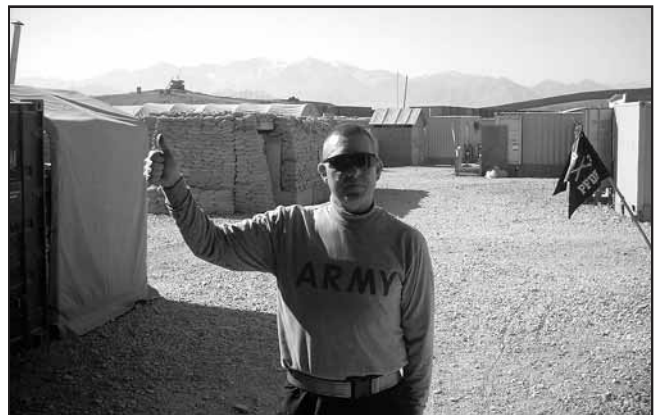
In the next three weeks I will begin Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University with 25 participants, and the FAST (Functional Academic Skills Training) classes for the junior soldiers who want to improve their General Technical scores to reclassify their occupational specialties. I guess the best way to make the time go by is to stay busy.

Carrie and the boys are staying steady and strong in my absence. Jimmy just turned 13, so we are officially parents of all teenagers. Tommy turns 15 next Sunday. Wow.

Their next engagement is a trip to Gatlinburg and Westgate during break. I will miss that one but know they will have a blast.

No news on the Major board, but will keep you posted. Thanks for your thoughts and prayers on that. Obviously those results will determine our life in 2012.

Take care, and as time permits stay in touch with me.
Many blessings, Jerry

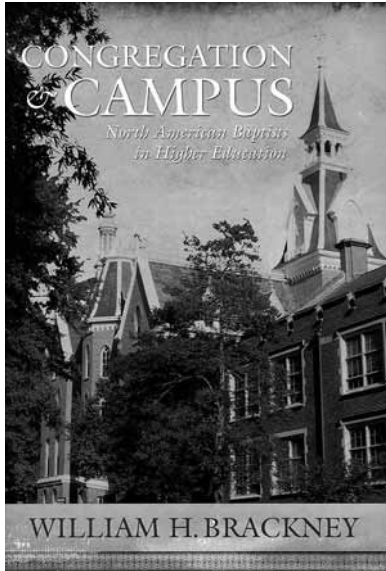


Chaplain Johnson gives a thumbs up after training run.

Congregation and Campus

A book review

by James A. Skaggs



William H. Brackney, *Congregation and Campus: North American Baptists in Higher Education*, Mercer University Press, 2008.

William Brackney is a distinguished academic historian, a Baptist, and author of works like *The A to Z of the Baptists* [2009] and *Historical Dictionary of the Baptists* [2nd edition, 2009]. He has spoken at our General Conference about Baptist history, and has always included Seventh Day Baptists within the larger Baptist community in his research and writing.

This 2008 book is, as the subtitle indicates, a history of Baptist colleges and universities in North America. Since Seventh Day Baptists founded institutions of higher learning, and helped to found others, we get at least our fair share of attention here too.

After a general introductory chapter about “The Meaning of Baptist Identity in Higher Education,” the book is largely a narrative of the creation and development of Baptist colleges. Beginning in England, then the American colonies, and up till now in North America, the story encompasses every variety of Baptist identity.

The book also recounts how schools once identified as Baptist (Brown, for instance, in Rhode Island, among whose founders were Seventh Day Baptist) are no longer so identified. The relationship to a denomination became increasingly attenuated and finally disappeared altogether; a process with which SDBs are very familiar.

A Seventh Day Baptist example is Alfred (N.Y.) University:

“...In the westward progress of the Seventh Day Baptist movement, training of ministers was a priority as was education of the youth of the churches where the isolation of the congregations often placed them at a disadvantage. As ministerial education came to the forefront in 1855, the Education Society resolved to found a denominational college and theological seminary. The proposed curriculum involved a three-year high school program; a four-year college course that involved a classical and scientific direction; a women’s course offering a ‘laureate’ degree; and a set of classes in theological subjects like the biblical languages, ecclesiastical history, and natural theology. Within two years the interest in a theological school progressed to warrant

a university charter and this was granted in 1857. Although a separate department did not emerge for several years, a Seventh Day Baptist minister, Jonathan Allen, was appointed professor of theology as part of the collegiate program...

“In 1870 the nascent theological department became Alfred University School of Theology within Alfred University. As historian Don A. Sanford notes, the School of Theology continued as the primary institution for training of Seventh Day Baptist ministers until 1963 when too few students of the denomination, low enrollment in general, and increased accreditation standards forced the closure of the seminary. As for Alfred University, it prospered into the 20th century as the primary institution of a small denomination with increasing support from non-church sources. [...] Seventh Day Baptist presidents administered the private institution, Alfred University, until 1945 when the denomination relinquished control.” (pp. 98-99)

Milton (Wis.) College and Salem (W.Va.) College, which followed a similar arc, are also included in the narrative. Each of these institutions served us well, and Seventh Day Baptists still identify with those that remain. But by the late 20th century, none were in any sense identifiably Seventh Day Baptist.

Dr. Brackney says of Seventh Day Baptists that although “mostly a small dissenter group... their overall aspirations to an enlightened form of Christianity were noteworthy.”

Not a bad epitaph for Seventh Day Baptist higher education. 



by Executive Director
Rob Appel

A Church on the Move

Spanish Church outgrows several locations

A note from Rob: In the months to follow I will be submitting articles about churches that are “On the Move.” This month’s is from the Iglesia Bautista del Septimo Dia in Houston, Texas. They are a branch of the Houston SDB Church in Bellaire. Their pastor is Miguel Leiva and he has written the article below.

Along with his wife Adrianna, Pastor Miguel began with a congregation of four to a group that has had over 100 in attendance. This has happened in a two-year timeframe! Let’s read with enjoyment and with the possibility of learning from what the Leivas have done through God’s grace and guidance.

Sometimes Brother Ricardo (a.k.a. Dick Shepard) will joke with us and cover his eyes with his hands and pretend to cry like a child saying, “Nobody loves me, and nobody wants to come to church with me.” He is joking about the days back in early 2008 when the Lord started the Spanish ministry in the Houston SDB Church.

The first year in the Houston Church was not easy. On our best days we had around 10 people attending. Sometimes it was only my wife, Adrianna, and maybe one or two others. I remember one Sabbath we invited some friends to worship with us to encourage our small congregation, and surprise—nobody else showed up!

On those days we would go to Dick, or Pastor Jim Barclift, and cry on their shoulders. I would feel bad that the numbers were so small because I was accustomed to preaching to churches sometimes with no less than 100 people every Sabbath.

But everything changed when God decided to take us from the location we were in, and plant us in a more Hispanic population area. At this point we became a branch of the Houston church and not simply worshipping in their location.

We started a radio program and people started to come. The first were a mother and her four sons and their families. Then three other families started attending. In March

The Lord has blessed the Spanish church in Houston with phenomenal growth.

Little ones (far right) are a big part of the church’s future.



2009 things were going great when, to our surprise, one of the original groups that started with us decided to quit church. They said they no longer believed in our denomination. This took away the whole original group because they were all family members.

This hit us like a ton of bricks, and for a while we thought of giving up. We thought maybe this was not God's calling. Maybe we should quit. However, it was not time to quit. The very next Sabbath we were going to have our first baptism. It was obvious that the Lord was leading this ministry and the church was going forward and not looking back.

From that time on the church has been growing. Our growth is at such a pace that we have had to move locations four times, each time looking for a bigger place!

We do not plan to stop growing. After the 2010 Conference, and with the help of the Memorial Fund, we started a TV program and we are seeing the fruit of that labor. *Thank you, SDB Memorial Fund trustees!* We prayed to God to bring us 100 people by the end of 2010. Now we are asking God to double that number by the end of 2011.

In Houston, like any other big city, thousands of people need to hear the message of God. We are finding ways to get that message to the people who need to hear it.



Celebrating a footwashing service.



Expanding to their fourth location in a short amount of time.

We do understand that God is bigger than “numbers.” It is about getting the Word out to all who will hear it. In that endeavor, we are asking for even greater things. Our church is praying for the power of God to help us plant another Spanish church in Houston this year.

The church, we believe, is not a human religious club, but a supernatural entity. We are the Body of Jesus Christ, and that's why we are asking for greater things and we are expecting it! We believe we should pray and then expect things—like bigger churches and a bigger denomination. We believe this because we know that there are millions who need the Lord.

I want to share some of what the Lord has taught us during this time.

First, we learned that He is the head of the Church, and we are only instruments. Our first job is to understand it, and let Him guide us. This is *His* job, and we should live expecting supernatural things to happen.

Second, we learned that God wants us to do our very best. We need to bring the people to Him, and it doesn't matter if it looks like we are not getting results. If we do our part, He will bring new people to the church (and sometimes they

are not the people we were trying to help). Our responsibility is to work, and then leave the results to Him. He will give us victory. If we trust Him, we will not fail, and He will be victorious.

And **third**, trust Him and His Word. He said that if we put our hands over the sick, the sick would be healed. We have witnessed this more and more. If we bring the people to Him, He will restore their families, their lives, their wealth, and their dignity.

The people of the Iglesia Bautista del Septimo Dia in Houston want to thank our brothers and sisters in Christ at the Houston SDB Church in Bellaire. Without our English-speaking friends we would not be able to move this ministry to so many in such a short amount of time. Thank you so very much for caring for us.

We really have an awesome God... and we praise Him! **SR**



The Leivas



Depression and emotional illness

by Barb Green, Parish Nurse
Milton, Wis.

Charles Spurgeon. Abraham Lincoln. Elijah. Winston Churchill. King David.

All these men had one thing in common: they all suffered at various times from the dark cloud of depression.

Depression is called the “common cold” of emotional illnesses. It affects many people and is misunderstood, misdiagnosed, and confused with lack of faith. One out of every four women and one out of every seven men become clinically depressed at some point in their lives. Children and teens are also affected.

Depression can be as simple as a “mood,” or—at the other end of the continuum—a serious disorder. It can range from feeling a little down to feeling suicidal. It is an emotional state of pain, a thinking state of confusion, and a physical state of dysregulation.

Psalms 6 and 13 describe it with such expressions as, “My bones are in agony, my soul is in anguish, I am worn out from groaning, I flood my bed with weeping and my eyes grow weak with sorrow. How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?”

Symptoms of depression can include: low self-esteem, fatigue, unexplained headaches or backaches, loss of appetite or overeating, difficulty sleeping or sleeping too

much, restlessness, irritability, feelings of hopelessness, difficulty making decisions, loss of interest and enjoyment in most things, loss of sexual desire, and recurrent thoughts of death or dying.

The precise cause of depression is not known. Some people are genetically predisposed to the chemical imbalances that bring on depression. Certain medications and physical illnesses have depression as a side effect; for example, hypothyroidism, migraine, heart disease, fibromyalgia and others. It may be the result of trauma, loss or adjustment. It can also be caused by burnout, chronic unmet needs, unresolved grief, unresolved anger, pent-up emotions, bitterness, lack of forgiveness, helplessness, negative think patterns, stress, sleep deprivation, shame or spiritual dryness.

While there is no blood test or diagnostic test for depression, a doctor will ask about symptoms and medical history, giving special attention to alcohol and drug use, thoughts of death or suicide, family members who have had depression, and sleep patterns. A physical exam can help rule out other causes of symptoms. A mental status exam or neuropsychiatric evaluation may also be performed.

Having depression doesn’t mean that a person is weak, or a failure, or isn’t really trying; it means they need treatment. Most people with

depression can be helped with psychotherapy, medicine, or both. Talking about feelings with a trained professional can help one learn more effective ways to deal with problems or to identify and resolve the conflicts contributing to depression.

Up to 70% of depressed people find relief from their symptoms with antidepressants. These drugs simply replace what is depleted in the body and help one return to normal. They can take two to six weeks to reach their maximum effectiveness, and more than one type may need to be tried before finding the right one.

Once a medication works, a person should stay on it until the doctor says they can safely stop. Medications for depression may need to be taken for a lifetime. Don’t resist this advice. There is no shame in taking something that improves your quality of life.

Praying and reaching out to someone you trust can also help depression. A person might feel far from God or find it difficult to experience His love or joy, yet it may be a time when they need to cry out to Him as David did in the Psalms.

To reduce the chance of getting depressed be aware of family risk factors, develop social supports, and learn stress management techniques. Stay healthy by eating right, getting adequate sleep and exercising. Depression is a very painful but treatable condition. Please do not suffer alone. Seek help. **SR**



Women's Society page by Kristin Camenga
www.sdbwomen.org

Content to be single

by Pam Gould

Ah, February. The month when hearts and minds turn to romance.

Last Valentine's Day, I got a membership at the YMCA. It was a gift to myself. I wanted to "Look after my heart," you might say.

I'm single. Not dating, not engaged, never married. I came close once, within weeks in fact. But something—well, Someone—stopped me in my tracks. It was God, my protector. I'm grateful that God stopped me from entering into a marriage that wasn't for me.

When I realized God wanted me to end the relationship, I grieved. I grieved the loss of a dream—of spending my life with that person—and the loss of the children I had expected to have. I ended the relationship because I knew it was God's will. But I did it convinced that I'd be unhappy for the rest of my life.

Instead, from the moment I stepped out in faith and obedience, God blessed me and He has continued to bless me (abundantly) and in countless unexpected ways. That certainly taught me the value of "walking by faith and not by sight."

Singleness. Most women I hear shudder at the thought. They sound miserable, some even desperate.

Not me. I revel in the freedom I have to go where God leads and to focus on learning about Him and serving Him. It's an awesome adventure and I encourage you, as

the Bible says, to be content in whatever state you find yourself.

Paul (inspired by the Holy Spirit) wrote in 1 Corinthians 7 about the ongoing conflict a married Christian woman has: torn between her love for God and serving Him, and her love for her husband and pleasing him. Not a problem for me.

Don't mistake my attitude for bitterness or hostility toward men. I enjoy time with my Christian brothers, but if God has nothing more in mind than friendships, that's fine. My life is full.

Singleness has given me the freedom to pursue amazing opportunities. I completed a four-year Biblical Counseling program a few years ago. Last spring, I traveled to Atlanta and helped rebuild houses through Samaritan's Purse.

I've completed training in crisis counseling and been accepted as a member of the Billy Graham Rapid Response Team. Plus, I've attended my first two SDB Conferences and, of course, God led me to the wonderful church I attend.

I'm not alone in my attitude. I have a friend who has been divorced for two decades and is content, happy to be free to teach God's Word and counsel women. Another single friend is overjoyed because she recently entered the mission field full-time where she works with orphans.

Marriage is great, having a family is wonderful, but it's not God's plan for all of us.

I urge you, if you're single, to put loving and serving God first in your life, and then work on loving your neighbor. Focus on those and understand who you are in Christ and you'll have a good foundation for whatever God has in mind for you.

I'm content and trusting in the plans God has for my life. I can also report that He has blessed me with a "child." Not the kind I had expected, but a four-legged one who loves to meet new people. We're currently working together to become certified as a team for ministry.

I wholeheartedly believe Romans 8:28, that God works all things for good in the lives of His people. And I understand, as verse 29 tells us, that the point is for us to be conformed into Christ's likeness.

Well, I'm clearly not there yet, but I do have one thing in common with my Savior: Jesus was single, too! **SR**

Pam Gould is employed as a newspaper reporter. She is a member of the Washington, D.C., Seventh Day Baptist



Church where she teaches the high school class, serves as Sabbath School Superintendent, and is a writer and editor for the Truth for Youth SDB curriculum. She and Emma Grace live in Virginia.



Ministry on the Frontier

SDBs in South Dakota

When it comes to evangelistic growth, Scripture tells us that “God gives the increase.” Yet we are often tempted to give people too much credit or responsibility for a ministry’s success or failure.

The same is true with our other missionary efforts. We believe that God is responsible for the success or failure of a ministry. But in order to get God “off the hook” when a ministry or outreach doesn’t meet our expectations, we often place the blame with the people involved rather than God.

In truth, all of our efforts to assess the performance of our ministries are based on an assumption we have about what God wants to do with them. There are likely many cases where we might label a ministry a “failure,” God would deem it a success.

One possible example can be found in Seventh Day Baptist missionary efforts in South Dakota. Comparatively little is known of those congregations in southeastern South Dakota in the late 1800s. The information we do have gives us every indication that though the congregations meeting in that area did not survive for more than a generation, their impact on Seventh Day Baptists makes their work a resounding success.

In the late 19th century, there were at least four SDB congregations in South Dakota:

- **Big Sioux**
- **Big Springs**
- **Danville** (Viborg)
- **Pleasant Grove**

Two other places mentioned in descriptions of SDB work might also have been holding meetings: Parker and Pleasant Valley. Members of the four known congregations make mention of the other two, but little else is known.

The first four congregations listed above have a diverse and amazing story that helps us understand God’s economy in our missionary efforts.

The Seventh Day Baptist groups in South Dakota were culturally diverse, with at least three of the congregations speaking a language other than English.

The Big Sioux group was comprised of Danish settlers, organized in 1877 after Morton Olson and his family migrated to the area.

Olson encountered the Sabbath in Omaha, Neb., and upon landing in South Dakota, started a church that became Seventh Day Baptist after visiting with an SDB missionary there. Olson preached to his small congregation in Danish.

Other Danish settlers comprised the SDB group in Danville (Turner County), which was later renamed Viborg. In the same way, Swedish immigrants in Union County founded the Big Springs church in 1876. This was after a split with the first-day Baptist church. The Pleasant Grove congregation was made up of immigrants from a variety of other SDB churches.

These groups cooperated in missionary efforts with other Baptists. Revival meetings and other evangelistic outreaches led to baptisms of new converts, despite their language barriers. In addition, they founded their own Missionary Society and held meetings in the early 1880s to mobilize and carry out their Kingdom responsibilities.

After fruitful years of ministry, the SDB churches in South Dakota began to disperse. Settlers moved to other locations to seek education for their children, to avoid the harsh weather conditions, or because of advancing age.

Those who participated in these churches did not vanish from Seventh Day Baptist life. When their congregations slowly dispersed, they found their way into other SDB congregations, strengthening and reinforcing them. Several of the children born in South Dakota went on to become fruitful members of churches in Battle Creek, Mich.; Gentry, Ark.; Dodge Center, Minn.; Nortonville, Kan.; Milton, Wis.; and others.

While we might be tempted to call the ministries in South Dakota “failures,” those efforts produced a generation of SDB leaders that took their Gospel responsibilities seriously. We should be challenged to reevaluate our own assumptions about judging a ministry thanks to examples like these. **SR**



Seminarian Profile

Seminarian Profile



Name: Dustin Mackintosh

Birthdate and place:

November 28, 1980 Glendale, California

Family:

Wife: Anna

Kids: Logan (6), Arabelle (3), Dylan (3 months)

Parents: Ralph and Dede Mackintosh

Education:

BS in Computer Science from Univ. of California, Irvine

Seminary: Fuller (2003-2006)
Denver (2007-2011)

I expect to graduate in May 2011

Ministry experience:

“Stained Glass” musical touring group;

15 years leading worship;

Pastoral mentorship at Next Step Christian Church

Non-ministry experience:

10 years as full-time software engineer

Favorite Bible passage:

Philippians 2

Favorite author:

Brandon Sanderson (right now)

If given a \$10,000 check, I (we) would:

Jump around like crazy people. Then we would use it to accelerate our four-year plan to reduce

software development hours (my full-time job) in favor of church ministry hours.

A great answer to prayer was:

Healthy babies. We were in the hospital with Arabelle for six weeks before delivery, and spent a week in the hospital with Dylan on oxygen. We are blessed (and challenged) to have three very healthy kids running/lying around the house.

A project I’m excited about:

The Next Step church is learning about and practicing Spiritual Disciplines this year. I will be sharing what I have learned over the last couple years and we will travel this well-worn path together.

My vision for SDBs:

Healthy local churches. We hold a great truth and blessing in the Sabbath, but there’s always a next step in relationship with God and each other. My vision is for healthy, energetic, fully committed churches. **SR**

Updates from the Center on Ministry

- **Carl Greene**, from Berlin, N.Y., has been accepted in the Seminary Education Program
- **Dustin Mackintosh** is to graduate from seminary in May, and **David Stall** in December
- We **THANK** everyone who has been (and will be) supporting our Seminary Education students. With the high number of seminarians, each has been asked to raise some funds toward their school costs. Please give generously.
- Following Pastors Conference (*April 26-30; see the ad on page 26*) the Milton Church is also sponsoring a Missions Conference on April 30-May 1.



Nominate an outstanding teacher

Nominate one of your church's Sabbath School teachers for the 2011 **Crystal Apple Award**. This award recognizes one teacher each year whose outstanding teaching skills have helped to prepare their students for Christian growth.

Think about the gifts, skills, abilities and attitudes your Sabbath School teachers bring to the class. Choose one who consistently and currently demonstrates the kind of teaching you would like to encourage. Then, nominate that person for this award.

You are invited to participate in the nomination process. In February, we will mail the nomination forms to pastors and Sabbath School Superintendents across the Conference. If for any reason you need an additional form, contact the Board of Christian Education office and we will send additional forms to you.

Once you have the form, simply gather the necessary information, enter it on the form, and mail it back to us by **June 30, 2011**. In July, we will pick a Sabbath School Teacher of the Year and announce the Crystal Apple recipient at General Conference.

Each member and branch church of the SDB General Conference may nominate one teacher. The following criteria will be used to determine the Sabbath School Teacher of the Year:

- *Is a member in good standing of the nominating church*
- *Exhibits the qualities of faith and teaching found in the life and teaching of Christ*
- *Currently serves as a Sabbath School teacher*
- *The church has **not had a recipient** of the award in the last three years*

If you need a nomination form, please contact the Board of Christian Education office.

Phone: (607) 587-8527

Fax: (607) 587-9895

sdbbce@EducatingChristians.org

PO Box 115, Alfred Station NY 14803 **SR**



**In the last 10 years,
the following teachers
have received the
Crystal Apple Award:**

2010 – **Dagoberto Alonzo**
Washington, D.C.

2009 – **Ruth Hazen**
Central SDB
Mitchellville, Md.

2008 – **Velma Taylor**
West Palm Beach, Fla.

2007 – **Ed Cruzan**
White Cloud, Mich.

2006 – **Wesley Greene**
Columbus, Ohio

2005 – **James Goodrich**
North Loup, Neb.

2004 – **Lucinda Snyder**
Alfred Station, N.Y.

2003 – **John W. Griffin**
Paint Rock, Ala.

2002 – **Larry Bird**
Washington, D.C.

2001 – **Judy Parrish**
Battle Creek, Mich.



FOCUS on Missions

Malawi: A Call for Help

by Kirk Looper

Over the past several decades, one of the chief concerns of the Missionary Society is for the ministry undertaken in Malawi, Africa. It is one of our oldest mission fields and plays a very prominent place in the overall SDB work done in Africa.

Presently, Malawi has four active clinics that supply medical and educational support to areas where there is a real need. We have tried to keep the clinics at a high level of proficiency and professionalism. To do this we have to invest in the upkeep and care of the facilities of each clinic and within the structure of the Central Africa Conference (CAC). This means spending funds to repair or replace buildings or vehicles.

A project developed early on had people buying bricks to build a mission house in Blantyre. Later another project provided bricks for a hospital building at Makapwa. During this time, funds were raised to purchase an ambulance for the Makapwa/Chiphosho clinics.

A mini-bus was later purchased to haul patients to and from the government hospital to those clinics. While Pastor David and Betty Pearson were stationed there during their last term, a mini-bus was purchased to help them in their work. It was fantastic to see the willingness of our people to share their blessings through these types of projects.

We are again at another crossroads in the work in Malawi. They need to replace a vehicle that was lost to them through fire. The Conference vehicle serves to transport visitors and officers to meetings. It is used on a regular (nearly daily) basis and is often full of guests.

The Toyota Hiace 4x4 Wheel Drive that the CAC owned was reduced to ashes before the fire brigade and police could respond. Since the vehicle was so old

and not highly insured, they received no compensation for their loss. It was thought that the fire was the result of an electrical problem.

Anyway, the CAC office now has no personal transportation. This makes the office operations and Conference administration difficult to perform. Their desire is to replace the vehicle with something comparable.

They are in the process of searching to locate a good used one. The minimum cost of such a vehicle would be about \$7,000. We want to raise funds through donations to reach this minimum amount.

In the past we have tried to purchase vehicles through a program working out of Japan. Vehicles driven in Japan must be less than five years of age. Those that are older are collected and shipped to African companies for resale.

The last minivan we ordered for Malawi cost \$2,700 US. However, it took nearly twice that amount to get the men to Durban, South Africa to retrieve and deliver it to

Malawi. The costs included travel expenses for two, taxes as they crossed country boundaries, registration, repairs, etc. It was not considered a good investment.

It is felt that they can locate a good vehicle in Malawi that would not cost any more and would be in better condition when they took possession of it.

So, in an effort to get the work in Malawi back on the proverbial "road to recovery," we are asking for churches and individuals to help raise these funds. During this fundraising time we will be looking for the best way to replace the vehicle.

Please pray for this project and ask your congregation members to donate. On behalf of the Central Africa Conference, we thank you for your efforts. **SR**

The Central Africa Conference now has no vehicle, thereby making the office operations and CAC administration difficult to perform.



The CAC vehicle before being destroyed by fire.



the BEACON

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

February 2011

Fundraising, Loving your Neighbor, and Toilets

by Emily Olson

The youth of this Conference have an addiction. We really, really, really like fundraising.

In the five years that I have been a “youth,” we’ve raised money for Malawi, Haiti, and other places on the national level. I’m not quite sure why we like it so much, but it’s seemed to stick.

At Conference last year, the youth decided to do something big. We decided that we wanted to provide for churches in need. However, it wasn’t enough for us to just donate money to the general Relief Fund. We wanted to create a relief fund of our own.

After talking it over, we figured that if every local youth group (represented at the meeting) could raise about \$500, it would be sufficient to start one. The Memorial Board agreed to hold the money for us, and youth reps from different parts of the country would help decide where the money could be distributed.

We raise funds because we enjoy it, but that doesn’t mean God doesn’t have something to say about it. While discussing the greatest Commandment, Jesus said, “Love the Lord

your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.”
(Mark 12:30-31)

All the fundraising we do is because we want to put our love into



action—to *show* that we love our neighbors as much as ourselves. Instead of buying new clothes, saving up for an iPod, or filling up our gas tanks to cruise around with our friends, we give a little to someone who needs it more. In that way we seek to keep God’s Commandments.

Now, we might not raise the money in the most conventional way. For instance, the Berlin (N.Y.) Youth Fellowship plans to place

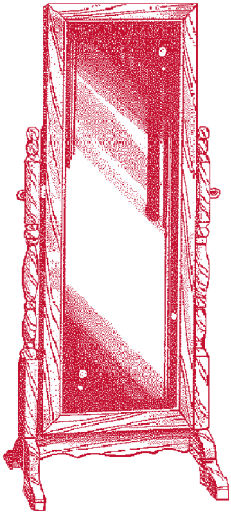
colorful toilets on people’s lawns. We decided that this year we wanted to include the community in our fundraiser. You see, I had this great—or, not-so-great—idea that we could do “traveling toilets” to raise money.

Basically, we’ll obtain one or two toilets and decorate them. We plan to warn the entire community of what is going to happen, so the people who don’t want to participate have the chance to become “potty poopers” before the games begin.

To start the process, a toilet is placed on a person’s lawn. That person can choose to either get the toilet removed from their lawn (for a small fee), or place it on someone else’s lawn (for a couple dollars more).

During the event you can choose to purchase “potty protection” to ensure that a toilet is not placed on your front lawn again. Unfortunately, since we are located in upstate New York, we can’t do this fundraiser until July when all the snow has finally melted...

No matter how we choose to raise money, it’s the thought that counts. As Valentine’s Day approaches, I encourage you all to put a little love in your neighbor’s heart. **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 portrait of perseverance

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance."—James 1:2-3

Like most people, I've had my share of trials over the years. Growing up with a mother who constantly battled depression and anxiety; becoming a widow at age 38; being diagnosed with Stage 3 breast cancer in my mid-50s.

Those experiences certainly weren't "joyous." But I've come to realize that "bad" things can make each of us a better person and a stronger Christian.

Some people throw up their hands in defeat and curse God when calamities bombard them, while others lean on God even more. He is our strength and our refuge. By relying on God—and trusting in Him—we eventually emerge from life's storms with an even stronger faith. We learn to persevere, knowing that whatever we face, God will get us through it.

Francis "Fran" McBride grew up in Milton, Wisconsin, and married my neighborhood "buddy," Barry von Falkenstein.

When Fran was a year old, her mother died of polio. Anna was nine months pregnant at the time, and her full-term baby also died.

When Fran was 12, her father died of uremic poisoning. He was only 49. The four McBride children grew

up on the family farm under the watchful eye of their paternal grandmother, Mary McBride. Following her son's death, Mary moved into Milton with her orphaned grandchildren.

When Fran was a high school senior, her grandmother passed away. When she was in college, her guardian uncle (Bill McBride) fell off his bicycle and died.

Fran began thinking, *Why are all these people dying?*

"So I went to a psychiatrist and tried to figure it out," Fran has shared. "And then *HE* died. So I gave up," Fran laughs.

She survived so many difficulties growing up, but more trials were down the road.

In the early spring of 2001, Fran collapsed on the kitchen floor while carrying a wash bucket. She yelled her husband's name just before suffering a seizure. She swallowed her tongue, but Barry was able to get her breathing again.

"Fifteen seconds later, she would have been in the basement and I never would have heard her," Barry said.

Fran had another seizure while having a CAT scan at the hospital. Doctors put her in an induced coma and flew her to the University Hospital in Madison.

The next day, Fran underwent 10 hours of brain surgery for a ruptured aneurism. She was hospitalized for several weeks and underwent another surgery to "clip" a second aneurism that hadn't burst yet. She was blind after the first procedure.

"The pressure from my bleeding brain was so strong that it burst blood vessels in my eyes, filling both with blood," Fran said. "I was blind for a couple of months before surgery restored my sight."

She spent time at different facilities receiving in-patient rehab before finally returning home—almost five months to the day of her collapse.

“

"Bad" things can make each of us a better person and a stronger Christian.

”

When Fran's aneurism ruptured, she had a near-death experience. "I saw a bright light and felt a tremendous sense of peace," Fran reflects. "It feels fantastic to still be alive, and I'm not afraid of death any more."

The near-fatal episode left Fran with "stroke-like" symptoms on her body's right side. She maneuvers with a cane and has limited use of her right leg and arm. She uses a wheelchair whenever she leaves the house, and she has a permanent shunt in her brain that drains fluid into her abdomen.

Although it's taken nearly a decade, Fran has miraculously regained 85% of her mental capacity. Her faith has grown over the years, and she's an accomplished "pro" at persevering. You go, girl! **SR**



The President's Page
by Stephen Rogers

Holland, Michigan July 31–Aug. 6, 2011

Living the Fruit of the Spirit of Kindness



In this “in-your-face, never-back-down, never-give-in, dog-eat-dog” world, there seems to be little room left for kindness. We are so preoccupied with our own concerns that we fail to see the opportunities that life presents us to care for others.

All too often, kindness is perceived as a weakness and not a strength. An act of kindness is not a compromise of the truth. It is not a “giving up” or a “giving in,” or a surrendering to something trivial.

Kindness is not a compromise; it is a quality of character, an attitude, a way of living that is a measure of our commitment to the teachings of Christ.

Jesus embodied kindness. He modeled it in everything he did or said. The goal for each of us is to be kind to others as Jesus was kind to us. Kindness is a sign of greatness. It certainly was for Jesus and it should be for us as well.

Carrying out acts of kindness is sometimes overlooked and not sought after as actively as perhaps it should be. Some people think that trying to be kind to others is too costly to one’s self. To them it is too time-consuming or too demanding or too likely to be misunderstood—or maybe too likely to interfere with their own lifestyle.

However, living a Spirit-filled

life is not to be avoided because of the costs (real or imagined). If we are truly following the example set for us by Christ, we must treat others not just as we would want to be treated, but in fact treat them the way Christ has treated us: with love, sympathy, benevolence, generosity, and yes, kindness.

Are these qualities costly? Anything worth having will “cost” something! These are qualities that are worth much more than any cost.

When we consider how much the world has changed since Jesus’ time, and how much of this change was influenced by his example of “living kindness,” we must be impressed.

There were no hospitals in his day, no nursing homes or convalescent care facilities. There were no orphanages, no retirement homes, no group homes, no shelters for the poor, and no provisions for the homeless. His world was a difficult place to live in the best of circumstances.

Today, wherever Christianity has gone, the followers of Christ have taken his example of kindness with them and given of themselves; not for earthly gain or the expectation of heavenly reward, but simply following the steps of the Master.

Stephen Grellet (1773-1855), a French-born Quaker minister, expressed the same thought in a poem. “I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good thing, therefore, that I can do or any kindness I can show to any fellow human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer nor neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.”

May we all follow in those footsteps as we Live in the Fruit of the Spirit of Kindness. **SR**



The Good and Not-So-Good of Church Loans

by Dr. George Cruzan
Memorial Fund President

Here's some Good News:

Many churches have been helped in obtaining new facilities or renovating facilities by a loan from the Memorial Fund.

And the Not-so-Good News:

This program has been so successful that the Fund is running out of money to lend.

For years, the Memorial Fund Trustees have invested part of the Fund endowments into the ministry of growing churches by making loans for new buildings or renovations. Many churches have become part of this ministry.

Currently, 13 churches have loans from the Memorial Fund totaling \$4,721,515 (an average of \$363,200 per church). The Fund holds over \$10 million in endowments; that is, money available for investment, not spending. That means that 44% of the Memorial Fund endowments are invested in local church facilities.

Our Investment Counsel continually recommends that we diversify the funds into different types of investments to minimize risk of failure. Strictly from an investment standpoint, they recommend no more than 20% of the endowments be invested in bonds or loans.

As you can see, at 44% we are obviously well beyond the 20% investment in loans. So far, our SDB churches and organizations have been very faithful in meeting their loan payments. That causes us to be more willing to take the risk of investing more than 20% in church loans.

Historically, the fund grows when invested in stocks and other equities. However, repayment of those loans returns only the same amount as borrowed, and does not provide any growth.

The more money we have invested in loans, the less money is available to grow the overall value of the Fund. In the best interest for the future of your Memorial Fund, we need to reduce the percentage of endowments invested in loans.

With this in mind, the Board considered four options:


1. **Make whatever loans are requested** (if qualified) **without regard to percentage.** This could result in the entire Fund being invested in loans.
2. **Make loans that are the same as the total loan principle being paid back from existing church loans**—approximately \$250,000 per year. This would prevent the per-

centage of the Fund that is invested in loans from increasing, but would not reduce the percentage.

3. **Issue a moratorium on new loans until the percentage in loans was reduced to no more than 30% of the Fund.** This would mean no new loans for at least four years.
4. **Encourage churches to request smaller loans or to seek other sources for large loans.**

This might reduce the number and size of loans so that the percentage of the Fund invested in loans would be less than 44%.

As Trustees of the Fund, we would like to have \$20 million to lend to SDB churches, but we do not. We are trying to balance the needs of local churches for facilities, with the need for diversified investment and assistance to other needs of local churches and the denomination.

We have chosen to increase the interest rate on large loans for the present time, but will continue to examine this if additional restrictions on new loans are needed. 

(For the list of new interest rates, see page 23.)

Baptismal waters are stirred!

by Jacinta Sterling

The Agape SDB Church in St. Albans, N.Y., experienced a great move of the Holy Spirit on Sabbath, November 27, 2010. After a morning of thanksgiving and praise, we held a baptismal service. Six people were slated to be baptized so we were rejoicing with the angels in heaven!

Thanks to an unprecedented move of the Holy Spirit, not “one or two” more indicated their need to be baptized, but SEVEN more young believers were baptized, giving a total of 13! Praise the Lord!! (Three candidates were from the Faith SDB Church in the Bronx.)

The Agape Church started in November 2001 and is blessed with four pastors, two of whom were recently ordained. They are:
Samuel Sterling— Leader
E.A. Downes— Assistant Leader
 and Pastor in charge of evangelism
Deryck Thomas— Youth Pastor
Ronald Smith— Pastor in charge of programs and activities



Front (l to r): Chad Ferguson [inset], Nashon Headley, Nathaniel Downes, Neil Robertson, Nikita Robertson and Dionna Wright.
Back: Saneka Edwards, Sasha Bailey, Milandra Thompson, Marsha Stewart, Aniel Headley, Milton Thompson and Vernon (Andrew) Loney.

The three main activities of the Agape church year are summer revival services (held outdoors), a summer concert, and our Anniversary service every first Sabbath in November.

Other activities include a photo ID of everyone, Bible quiz every Sabbath (based on the sermon), and for the youth, a quiz based on given Bible chapters. A prize is awarded for these quizzes.

A DVD of the worship service is produced each Sabbath. It is archived and made available to individuals at cost, and sometimes sent abroad.

We also have an early morning prayer network every Sunday and Wednesday morning at 5:00 o'clock. This prayer network began in February 2003 and has continued ever since. Anyone can join; the conference number is 712-451-6100 and the pin number is 881567#. **SR**

Denominational Dateline

February 2011

- 1-7 Sierra Leone, Africa—*Kirk Looper*
- 4 TCC Core Committee, SDB Center, Janesville—*Kevin Butler*
- 6 Online portion of Summer Institute begins—*Gordon Lawton, instructor*
- 17-18 CLT at SDB Center, Janesville
- 19-21 General Council, Janesville—*CLT and Elected members*
- 26 Installation of Pastor Fearon, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.—*Lawton, Rob Appel*
- 27 Ordination Council for Shirley Morgan—*Lawton, Appel*

March

- 5 Central Md.; Arlington, Va., churches—*Appel*

- 7 Baptist Joint Committee, Washington, D.C.—*Appel*
- 8-9 Baptist World Alliance, Wash., D.C.—*Appel*
- 10-11 West Virginia Wesleyan, Buckhannon, W.Va.—*Appel*
- 12 Cumberland, Md., church—*Appel*
- 20 Missionary Society Annual Meeting, Ashaway, R.I.—*Looper, Ron Elston*

April

- 16-17 Memorial Fund, Seattle—*Morgan Shepard*
- 23-24 Missionary Society Board of Managers, Ashaway—*Looper*
- 26-30 Pastors' Conference, Milton, Wis.—*Lawton, Butler, Nick Kersten*

Celebrating “The First Leon”

by Donna S. Bond

Imagine a Sabbath School children’s department (let’s say it’s in Shiloh, N.J.) preparing their Christmas musical under the direction of an eccentric perfectionist (let’s say it’s Bill Probasco).*

As so often happens, the potential cast of characters includes a social misfit who is determined to play a leading role. On December 11, this poor soul (played by Sam Hicks) happens to be named “Leon,” and he takes pride in the fact that his name is “NOEL” spelled backwards. In fact, he thinks his name gives him a special calling to be in the cast.

The director and other aspiring actors, however, have a different view of Leon. He just doesn’t have the “look, the style or the smile” of a superstar. Leon’s persistence pays off when he is named “understudy to the Innkeeper” with the assumption that the real innkeeper’s absence is a long shot. Still, Leon concentrates on learning his one line—“No room”—and practices it diligently, despite continued ridicule from the angels, shepherds and wise men.

Lo and behold! On the night of the

pageant, the innkeeper contracts a stomach virus and Leon is called to perform. The play goes on as thousands of nativity programs have, with Mary and Joseph coming to Bethlehem in need of a place to stay.

“Can’t you see my wife is about to give birth?” Joseph pleads with the stand-in innkeeper.

Right on cue, Leon responds proudly, “No room.” Then, after a moment of reflection, adds, “No, wait! You can have MY room!”

Our Savior is born in comfort, and history is changed.

Not really, of course, but the atmosphere in the sanctuary changes. While Leon is convinced that he has ruined the play, everyone else realizes he’s brought out the true meaning of Christmas.

The pageant concludes with a chorus challenging the congregation to “Make room for Jesus.” **SR**

** While Bill Probasco had the part of the director of the “play within a play,” sisters Suzanne Glaspey and Julie Schmidt were the actual directors of the celebration in Shiloh.*



Cast of the Christmas pageant “The First Leon” in Shiloh, N.J. “Leon” was played by Sam Hicks (kneeling in front).

New Interest Rates for Memorial Fund Loans

by George Cruzan
(from article on page 21)

Setting the Rates for 2011

The Memorial Fund trustees voted to continue the preferred interest loan policy for calendar year 2011. Preferred interest loans are loans up to \$100,000 for the first purchase of church property. Loans in this category approved during calendar year 2011 will bear interest at **4.5%** fixed, for the life of the mortgage.

Loans for renovation and additions to churches, or for renovation or purchase of parsonages—up to \$100,000 approved during calendar year 2011—will bear interest at **4.75%** fixed, for the life of the mortgage.

The interest rate for portions of loans over \$100,000 will vary on a calendar year basis, based on the prime rate from the first business day of October, plus a tiered percentage.

The variable rate for loans made prior to 2011 will be prime plus 0% (or **3.25%**) for 2011. [Past Memorial Board policy restated: The maximum upward adjustment will not exceed 1% per year. There will be no downward adjustment limits.]

It was voted the interest rate for portions of loans between \$100,000 and \$500,000 will be prime plus 2% (or **5.25%**) for new variable loans established during 2011.

It was voted the interest rate for portions of loans over \$500,000 will be prime plus 4% (or **7.25%**) for new variable loans established during 2011. **SR**

New members

Bay Area, CA

Steven Crouch, pastor

Joined after baptism

Lindsay Crouch

Huntsville, AL

(Branch of Paint Rock)

Derrick Whitlow, pastor

Joined after testimony

Freddie Johnson Whitlow

Ruth Whitlow

Derrick Whitlow

Kendrick Whitlow

Stephanie Roberts

Steffon Roberts

Alyssa Ferguson

Jerome Whyte-Miller

Sanique Whyte-Miller

Nancy Redman

Aaron Redman

Milton, WI

George Calhoun, pastor

Joined after testimony

Tacy Camenga

Ernie Fisher

Kathleen Hulstrom

Pamela Palmer

Joined by letter

Kathleen Sanford

Joined after baptism

David St. Clair

Nashville, TN

(Branch of Paint Rock)

Joined after testimony

Carol R. Wilson

John B. Wilson

Regina J. Paxton

Paint Rock, AL

John D. Bevis, pastor

Joined by letter

Adele Brown

Pauline Douglas

Joined after testimony

Nadiya Smyrnova

Tamara Smyrnova

Births

Williams.—A son, Aiden Joseph, was born to Khale and Sandra Williams of Miramar, FL, on September 15, 2010.

Shrewsbury.—A daughter, Hannah Isabel, was born to Matthew and Fernanda Shrewsbury of Miami, FL, on December 7, 2010.

Burgess.—A son, Rowan Bradley, was born to Brad and Ana (Priest) Burgess of Honolulu, Hawaii, on December 18, 2010.

Kersten.—A daughter, Sophia Faith, was born to Nick and Brittany (Schumitsch) Kersten of Janesville, WI, on January 6, 2011.

Marriages

Lombard – Diogene. Jeffrey Lombard and Cynthia Diogene were united in marriage on December 20, 2010 in Miami, FL.

Szczesny – Montgomery.

Michael Szczesny and Brecken Montgomery were united in marriage on January 8, 2011 in Huntsville, AL. Pastor John D. Bevis officiated.

Obituaries

Sutton.—Jeffery Dewain Sutton, 46, of Salem, W.Va., died on October 18, 2010 following a brief illness.

He was born October 14, 1964 in Chester, Pa., the son of Pastor Edward Sutton (Salemville, Pa.) and Brianna Pratt Spencer (Salem, W.Va.) who survive. He was married to the former Kimberly Sue Utter.

Jeff graduated from Doddridge County High School in 1983, and was well known as a meat cutter at the Salem IGA where he had been employed for 29 years.

He is survived by three daughters, Samantha Sue Hess and Whitney Sue Sutton, at home, and Tiffany Dawn Sutton of Florida; one sister, Terri LeAnn Newhouse of Salem; his stepfather, Bill Spencer of Salem, and stepmother, Patricia Sutton.

Jeff loved to ride his motorcycle, and enjoyed hunting, fishing and

camping. He was a hard worker and a good provider for his family.

Over 500 family members, friends, neighbors and coworkers called at the Greathouse Funeral Home in Salem on October 21, 2010 where Pastor Michael Cox presided over the service.

Thompson.— The Rev. Socrates Augustus Thompson, 93, of Deltona, Fla., went Home to be with the Lord on November 20, 2010.

Pastor Thompson was born on July 17, 1917 to Alexander and Jemima (Knight) Thompson in Guy's Hill, St. Mary, Jamaica. The seventh of eight children, he attended Guy's Hill Primary School and later Lincoln College in Kingston.

After attending the Wheelers Mount Baptist Church he became

cont. next page

Obituaries... continued

a Seventh Day Baptist in 1933. He worshiped at the Waterford SDB Church and served there as church clerk for 11 years.

In 1946, Socrates was offered a scholarship and attended the Alfred (N.Y.) University School of Theology. Completing his studies there in 1949, he entered Milton (Wis.) College that same year. Majoring in history and minoring in English, he graduated in 1951 and returned to Jamaica.

For the next six years he taught English, history and biology at Crandall High School (a Seventh



Rev. Socrates Thompson
1917–2010

Day Baptist school). Socrates married Clara Brown on December 25, 1951 and they had one child, Patricia Anne. In 1952 he was ordained and called to pastor the Luna SDB Church in St. Mary, where he served for 10 years. He also pastored at the following churches: Cottage, Tydixon, Boyinsville, Higgintown, Charles Street, Mountain View, White Hall, Labrynth, Mango Valley and Orange Bay.

During those years of pastoring he taught at Gaynstead, Waulgrove and Windsor High School, and was Headmaster at the SDB Maiden Hall

Vocational School. In 1964, he was elected President of the Jamaican SDB Conference.

From 1964 to 1966 Socrates was employed by the Jamaica Social Service Commission as an Adult Education Officer, teaching in prisons. He then worked as an Education field worker from 1966-68.

In 1968, Pastor Thompson again migrated to the United States to join his wife and daughter who were already there. He gained employment as a Caseworker, and later as a high school teacher with the City of New York. The next year he enrolled at City College to complete his Master of Education degree.

Along with Pastors Herb Saunders and John Bevis, Pastor Socrates was instrumental in the formation of the New York City SDB Church and served as its pastor for many years until his retirement.

Socrates and Clara relocated to Florida in 1996 and joined the SDB Church of Daytona Beach. He became ill in August of 2009, and stated in November 2010 that he wanted to "Go Home." On November 20, 2010 he got his final wish.

A service and burial was held at the Deltona Memorial Gardens in Orange City, Fla., on November 28, 2010. Pastor Wray Winborne of the Daytona Beach church officiated, assisted by Pastors Keith McCall, Andrew Samuels and Alcott Lynch.

Roe.—Wanda Jane (Wood) Roe, 60, of Boaz, Ala., passed to rest on December 1, 2010.

Wanda was born on January 20, 1950 in Etowah County, Alabama, the daughter of Albert and Mamie (Ensinger) Roe. She was a faithful member of the Paint Rock (Ala.) Seventh Day Baptist Church.

She is survived by her husband, Larry Roe; one son, Jeff; and a granddaughter. Four brothers also

survive: Gerald, Jimmy, Joe and Roger Wood.

Funeral services were at the McRae Funeral Home in Boaz, with Pastor John Bevis officiating.

Kenyon.—Ellen R. (Rathbun)

Kenyon, 90, passed away on December 31, 2010 at South County Hospital in Wakefield, R.I.

She was born on December 24, 1920 to Fred and Mary (Greene) Rathbun. She was the beloved wife of Elwin A. Kenyon Jr. of Charlestown, R.I., for over 67 years.

Ellen graduated from Westerly (R.I.) High School in 1938 and was employed at the Bradford Dyeing Association during World War II. She worked at the Hopkinton Town Hall for several years, and at the Bonner Monument Company for 22 years. She was a member of the Pawcatuck Seventh Day Baptist Church in Westerly.

In addition to her husband, she is survived by a daughter, Kathleen Hughes of Pawcatuck, Conn.; a daughter-in-law, Patricia (Lindsley) Kenyon of Charlestown; one sister, Jean Place of Charlestown; four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. She was predeceased by her son, Karl Kenyon, and four siblings: Harold Rathbun, Charles Lester Rathbun, Virginia Main and Robert Rathbun.

A funeral service was held on January 5, 2011 at the Buckler-Johnston Funeral Home in Westerly. Burial was in River Bend Cemetery.

Death Notice

Marion E. Cruzan, 96,
of White Cloud, MI died
on January 4, 2011.



Women's Society Robe of Achievement 2011 Nominations

The Robe of Achievement Committee of the SDB Women's Society is looking for nominations for a woman in the denomination who is:

- a committed Christian
- active in her local Seventh Day Baptist church
- has given service as a volunteer in some phase of denominational effort, and
- given special service in her community or family

A complete résumé should be submitted con-

taining a life history, including her achievements and activities. Without a résumé in hand, the committee cannot make a competent choice among many nominees.

The deadline is March 31, 2011, but there is no need to wait until the last minute to submit your nomination. The committee will gladly accept them any time. If you nominated someone before and they were not chosen, please resubmit your nomination.

Contact Karen Payne at 13528 595th Street, Claremont MN 55928 or karen.payne1127@gmail.com for a résumé form. The form is also available on the Women's Society website (SDBWomen.org).

Missionary Society Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the members of the Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society will be held at the First SDB Church of Hopkinton Parish House, 8 Church St., Ashaway, R.I., on Sunday, March 20, 2011, at 2:00 p.m. for the following purposes:

- To elect voting members, a Board of Managers and officers to hold office until the next annual meeting and until their successors are elected.
- To hear and act upon the reports of the Board of Managers and officers for the fiscal year January 1, 2010, to December 31, 2010.
- To ratify the appointment of independent public accountants for the current fiscal year.
- To consider and act upon such other matters as may properly come before said meeting or any adjournment thereof.

The Board of Managers has fixed the close of business on February 28, 2011, as the time at which members entitled to notice thereof and to vote at the meeting and any adjournment thereof shall be determined.

—Beverly Kilts, Secretary

“Leading Through Outreach Change”

Dates for SDB
Pastors' Conference
are set for
April 26-30, 2011
at **Camp Wakonda** in
Milton, Wisconsin

Our special guest will
be Dr. Howard Bixby of
ChristWay Ministries.

More info will be at
sdbministry.org

KEVIN'S

ORNER

Look at how much I saved!

Our local Kohl's department store in the Janesville Mall underwent some remodeling in 2010.

To help their precious and fragile customers "cope" with this tragic inconvenience, Kohl's sent out e-mail enticements: a free \$10 coupon inviting us to "Come and see what we've done to the place."

It worked for me. Along with their periodic 15, 20, or 30%-off coupons; plus their less-frequent \$10 "Kohl's Cash" when you spend \$50; and the sales discounts that are honored on top of their already-low "Gold Star Clearance" prices, a person can really save a lot of money shopping there.

Then they started a new practice. When they total up your purchases at the checkout counter, the clerk takes out a red pen, circles a number on the receipt and announces, "You saved [fill in the amount] dollars today!!"

Last week I strolled through their doors with my \$10 internet bribe in hand. My ingenious plan was to find one item that cost \$10—something that I thought I almost needed—use my coupon, and walk out victorious.

Hmmm... I've got plenty of coffee. I really don't need these after-Christmas closeout tools or gadgets. (I can see why they didn't sell.)

Ooh—the clearance racks of clothes, and they have a big selection in my size!

Hey, here's a nice cardigan-style sweatshirt. It's got a nice brown waffle pattern, a couple of stripes on the sleeves (how collegiate), a warm lining... Whoa. Original price: \$50. Clearance price: \$10! Exactly!

That's 80% off! Fits okay. Looks okay. I am so outta here!

Hmmm... Here are some *more* nice-looking long-sleeved shirts. Well, it is winter. It is Wisconsin. Oh, it wouldn't hurt to try on *just this one*...

And this one...

Oh, here's another one...

At the register with my FOUR items, I felt a bit defeated and a bit sheepish and a bit guilty as I handed the gal about \$25 in cash. But then she took the cap off her red pen, circled a number on the receipt and proclaimed, "You saved \$148.40 today!!"

I felt like I hit the lottery. "Woo-hoo! Thank you, Lord! Thank you, Kohl's! Thank you, America!" I wanted her to repeat the number a little louder so neighboring customers could hear my savvy shopping savings.

Then I got home. Where I should have gone *first* instead of going shopping.

I could've stopped at that one sweatshirt. I could have come straight home.

I looked into my closet. I looked in my dresser drawers. My warm, long-sleeved shirt supply was already overflowing!

But, "Look at all the money I saved!" The Kohl's girl was impressed.

Was the Lord?

Paul wrote to young Timothy, "*But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that*" (1 Timothy 6:6-8).

When I die, how many warm, long-sleeved shirts can I wear in the casket?

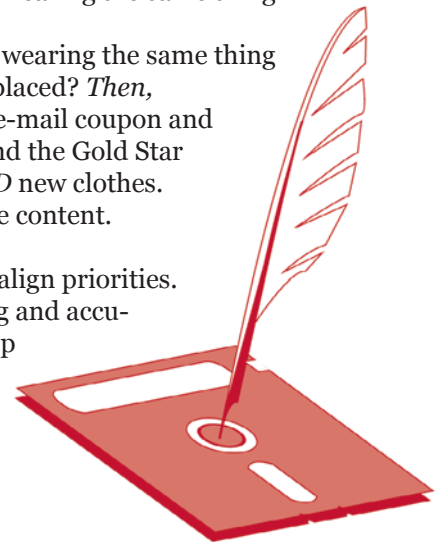
What's wrong with wearing the same thing lots of times?

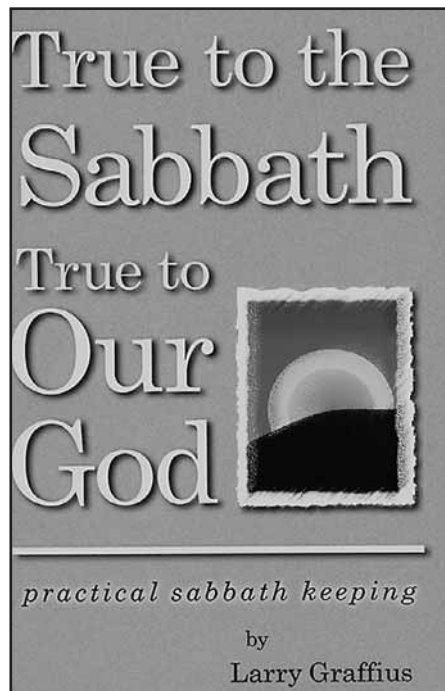
What's wrong with wearing the same thing until it *needs* to be replaced? *Then*, we could wait for the e-mail coupon and the discount mailer and the Gold Star sales... when we *NEED* new clothes.

I need to learn to be content.

Fasting can help realign priorities. Fasting from shopping and accumulating can help keep my sights on what is more important.

Fasting can help us be content.





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a significant principle
for believers?

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keep the Sabbath
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