



The Sabbath RECORDER

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Twain
speaks today

Tribute to
Nedd Lozani

July-Aug. 2012

News for and about Seventh Day Baptists



Churches don't just plant themselves!

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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

After the retirement of Pastor Harold King, **SpringsLife SDB Church** in Colorado Springs, Colorado is searching for a new pastor. Colorado Springs is located at the base of the Rocky Mountains an hour south of Denver, where the sun shines over 301 days a year. Our low humidity climate makes for outdoor activities year round, plus several colleges and seminaries (and an international airport) are in our city. In 2011 we remodeled a building on our property into a 1,000-sq ft parsonage. The church consists of committed Christian Sabbath-keepers. Please contact Tim Rood, 303-319-8058. Website: www.springslife.org.

The **Remembrance Seventh Day Baptist Church** in Fort Worth, Texas is also seeking a pastor. Anyone interested please call Gordon Lawton, Director of Pastoral Services, at the SDB Center: 608-752-5055.

**Seeking a
Director of Emerging Media**
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(Registration forms in the May issue and on-line. Regis. discount ends June 30)

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Establ. 1844

July-August 2012
Volume 234, No. 7/8
Whole No. 6,985

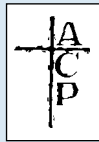


A Seventh Day Baptist publication
SabbathRecorder.org

The Sabbath Recorder (ISSN 0036-214X) (USPS 474460) is published monthly (combined July & August) by the SDB General Conference's Tract and Communication Council, 3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678. This publication is distributed at no cost to members and friends of Seventh Day Baptist churches and is made possible by donations from its readers. Periodicals postage paid at Janesville, WI, and additional offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Sabbath Recorder, 3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678*

This is the 168th year of publication for The Sabbath Recorder. First issue published, June 13, 1844. Member of the Associated Church Press. The Sabbath Recorder does not necessarily endorse signed articles.



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WRITERS: Please type manuscripts double spaced. Only manuscripts that include a stamped, addressed envelope can be returned. Unsolicited manuscripts are welcomed; however, they will be considered on a space available basis. No remuneration is given for any article that appears in this publication. Paid advertising is not accepted.

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5 MYTHS

about Church Planting



by George Lawson
Colton, Calif.

Recently I came across an insightful blog post about church planting myths from fellow church planter Joel Quile in Trophy Club, Texas. Included in his list of personal observations—

Myth:

Church planting is hard.

Reality:

Church planting is brutal.

Myth:

You will be tempted and tested when you plant a church.

Reality:

You've not seen tempting or testing until you plant a church.

Myth:

If you don't delegate, you'll struggle.

Reality:

If you don't delegate, you die.

Myth:

If you plant a church without the support of your wife, you'll fail.

Reality:

If you plant a church without the support of your wife, you'll get divorced first and then fail.

Myth:

You need good worship, good preaching and good kids' programs if people are going to come.

Reality:

If they don't have a place to serve (ministry) and people to serve with (community) they might come, but they won't stay.

I was so impressed with Pastor Joel's list of church planting myths,¹ I decided to compile a list of my own. Not because my list would be as sage (it isn't) or because I am an expert in church planting (I am not), but because I think that some common misunderstandings are often used to justify our lack of involvement in church planting. Again, while I have been called

to be a church planter, I do not fancy myself a church planting expert... any more than I am a parenting expert. Long ago, armed with several parenting books written by some of the nation's most distinguished experts in child rearing, my wife and I embarked on a new adventure confident that we knew what it took to be great parents. Four kids and 27 years later, the only thing I'm sure about is how little I knew about parenting! In that same vein, I humbly remain a life-long student of church planting.

However, as this is now my sixth year as a church planter, I am hopefully somewhat wiser than when I first started out. At the very least, I now have six years of experience in how *not* to plant a church. And in that time I have heard quite a few challenges to church planting. Here are five of the objections I've probably heard most often, and some reasons why I believe them to be false.

#1

WE HAVE ENOUGH CHURCHES ALREADY

Sadly, a community filled with church steeples doesn't necessarily indicate an abundance of biblical churches. Shouldn't we be more concerned about whether the Gospel message is being preached and new Christ-followers are growing in personal discipleship, rather than how many church buildings happen to exist in the local area?

The reality is that we are actually losing that particular battle. In fact, we are losing more ground

“

The true measure should not be the number of church buildings in a given area, but rather the number of unchurched people.

”

with each passing year. According to the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, there were 27 churches for every 10,000 Americans in 1900. Fifty years later that number had dropped to 17. Today there is closer to about 10 churches for every 10,000 Americans². And yet, the church planting rate in this country is half of what it was in the 1950s.³

The true measure should not be the number of church buildings in a given area, but rather the number of unchurched people. Did you know that less than 18% of Americans attend an orthodox Christian church

on any given weekend? With our population growing eight times faster than we're currently starting new churches, and existing churches closing at a rate of 3,200 per year, we could double the number of churches in America and still not be even close to meeting the current need.³

I received anecdotal evidence of this when God confirmed He was calling me to plant Maranatha Community Church (SDB) in Colton, Calif. During my first year, I visited 30 of Colton's largest churches

of various sizes and denominations. My primary goal was to get a clearer understanding of what a visitor experiences when visiting a new church as a first-time guest, and I certainly learned some valuable lessons.

But along the way I also tallied up the number of pew "seats" as I visited and was challenged at the end of my admittedly unscientific study to discover that even if all of Colton's churches were to have two services every weekend (only a handful currently have more than one service) and fill every available

* In an original "Muppet Movie" running gag, Kermit is confronted with various falsehoods about frogs. When he contends that it's a "Myth! Myth!" actress Carol Kane pops by and answers, "Yeth?"—thinking that Kermit is calling, "Miss! Miss!" I know, when you have to explain it...

seat they would reach *less than 10%* of the city's population. Surely, Colton can easily absorb more churches—and I suspect this is true for every community around the country.

#2

WE SHOULD STRENGTHEN OUR EXISTING CHURCHES

This objection doesn't deny that we need to be involved in evangelism. But it does tend to view church planting efforts as "misguided" since much-needed resources could be better invested in support of the churches already in existence, many of whom are struggling to survive.

As the pastor of a still very small church, I have considerable sympathy for those in weak and struggling churches; perhaps *especially* those in weak and struggling churches. However, despite my sympathy for this view, I still don't think we are faced with an "either/or" situation (i.e., either support existing churches or start new ones). Ultimately, we need to see this as a false dilemma.

This is not normally how we approach other ministries within the local church. For example, should

cont. next page

a congregation focus exclusively on evangelism, fellowship, service, prayer or discipleship? Of course, we should aim to serve well in all of these areas. And, in regard to the choice between strengthening existing churches or planting new ones, we should aim to do both as well.

Often those who bring up this objection are sincerely concerned that new churches will simply replace existing churches in their local area. But this is rarely the case. Often, the existing churches not only survive quite well, they are actually strengthened and grow because of the increased Christian “presence” in the community.

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A totally new church, with a totally new style, should have little or no negative impact on established congregations.

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Rather than intending to “shuffle sheep” away from existing churches, new congregations are usually designed—with unique ministry and worship styles—to reach completely different age, ethnic, or socioeconomic groups and so they tend to draw people our existing churches struggle to impact. A totally new church, with a totally new style, should have little or no negative impact on established congregations.

In order to best fulfill Christ’s Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) I propose that we need to both strengthen existing churches *and* support new churches!

#3 WE AREN’T BIG ENOUGH TO PLANT A CHURCH

With the rise of mega-churches in our culture today, it is easy to understand this concern. For example, *Outreach Magazine* reports annually on the nation’s 100 largest churches. Last year, the average attendance for those 100 churches was just over 10,000, with the

largest five churches averaging 27,000 each!⁴

Hearing church planting experts routinely talk about planting new churches with 50 people, \$50,000 and 5 paid staff only serves to reinforce the perception that only large churches can plant new congregations. (A speaker at one church planter conference I attended early in my ministry suggested a minimum “launch service” attendance of 200 in order for it to truly be considered a successful launch!)

Of course, another important statistic is lost in this discussion. Can you guess the average size of

a Protestant church in America? According to one researcher in the year 2000, it was 127.³ Imagine how many small churches have to exist alongside those larger churches to average 127?

To be honest, if planting a church requires having all of the above items in place, very few churches would be big enough. Beginning a work with those kinds of resources is actually church “transplanting” rather than church planting. Instead, church planting involves called and gifted individuals moving into an area and actively seeking to reach the lost through public and personal evangelism.

Size should not be a determining factor when deciding whether to participate in church planting. Churches that consider themselves too small to undertake the responsibility of sending and supporting a church plant on their own can enter into partnerships with other like-minded churches at a level appropriate to their situations. And, although by no means guaranteed, many smaller churches have found that involvement in church planting has actually strengthened and grown their own congregations.

More important than size in the ability to plant, is the health and the evangelistic heart of the sending church. Is God calling your church to participate in church planting? If so, I firmly believe that when God calls people to particular ministries He also provides the resources necessary.

#4 THERE AREN'T ENOUGH PASTORS TO PLANT NEW CHURCHES

Dr. Ed Stetzer, president of Lifeway Research and a leading missiologist, claims that “one of the greatest hindrances to church planting in North America is the notion that all churches must have seminary-trained pastors to be legitimate.”⁵

Dr. Stetzer points out that history reminds us that lay preachers have effectively planted many churches in this country and several denominations today continue to encourage lay leaders to start churches, regardless of their theological training.

Now, this is not to say that seminary training has no use. All Christians—in church leadership positions or not—should be in some form of “continuing education” when it comes to studying the Bible. And higher education can increase a pastor’s spiritual depth, develop ministry skills, and help ensure doctrinal stability. We should continue offering specialized training for lay leaders and bivocational pastors, as we do with our denomination’s CALLED and T.I.M.E. programs. But, surely, years of academic training are not necessary to begin a church. In fact, waiting for seminary training can often end up delaying God-called people from starting new churches.

One of the hallmarks of Baptist tradition is that we affirm the

priesthood of all believers; that laypersons have the same right as “professional pastors” to communicate with God, interpret Scripture, and minister in Christ’s name. We definitely need more leaders committed to pursuing the call of God on their lives—whether that is accomplished through seminary training or lay pastoring.

#5 SOMEONE ELSE WILL DO IT

Those who bring up this objection generally mean one of the larger churches will do it, or one of the wealthier churches, or a church nearer the targeted area, or.... But the larger churches have their own ministries, the wealthier churches have other good projects to support, and the churches which are closer may be struggling themselves to meet the need. So *no one* ends up doing anything!

Ironically, though, this is one myth that often does prove to be true. But it is often someone, or some group, whose theology and/or methodology of ministry leaves something to be desired and whose presence in a community ultimately masks the Gospel rather than making it plain for all to see.

There you have it, a brief attempt to discuss—and hopefully dispel—some commonly accepted myths about church planting. My hope is

that by continuing to raise these issues, we will all be compelled to go back to the Scriptures and seriously consider our responsibility before God in planting new churches and strengthening existing ones.

The biblical mandate is clear. When Jesus said, “I will build my church”; when He said “the harvest is great”; when He issued a “great commission”—surely he envisioned new groups of believers alive with missional fervor. The Book of Acts shows that church planting was fundamental to the growth of the early Church. If we wish to capture some of its dynamic and organic nature we would be wise to make church planting a vital part of our own activities as well. **SR**

George Lawson is pastor at Maranatha Community Church in Colton, Calif. The church plant is sponsored by the Riverside, Calif., SDB Church. They present their Sabbath service on-line at coltonchurch.tv.

¹ Pastor Joel planted Bara Church in September of 2009. His list of church planting myths can be found at <http://joelquile.blogspot.com/2011/05/church-planting-myths-p-1.html>

² Stetzer, Edward J., *An Analysis of the Church Planting Process*. A NAMB Self Study. May 2003

³ Dave Olson, Director of Church Planting for the Evangelical Covenant Church, has researched 10 years of consecutive attendance data from 300,000 Christian churches in America. <http://www.theamericanchurch.org>

⁴ “Outreach 100: Behind the Numbers.” <http://www.outreachmagazine.com/features/4328-Americas-Largest-and-Fastest-Growing-Churches.html>

⁵ Stetzer, Edward J., *Planting New Churches in a Postmodern Age*, 2003

7 REASONS to plant churches

by Dr. J.D. Payne
Louisville, Ky.

I want to provide you with **seven reasons** for leading your church to be involved in church planting. Now, I know some of you are already convinced of the need to be involved in such Kingdom work. If so, let me encourage you to use this information to assist your people in having a better understanding of the importance of church planting. Take it and contextualize it for your ministry setting.

Before we begin, however, I must provide you with my definition of church planting. While there are many ways to plant churches today, biblical church planting is evangelism that results in new churches. When we look to the Scriptures for a definition and model of church planting, we come to understand it as the birthing of churches from the harvest fields. While churches can be planted with long-term Kingdom citizens—and this is not necessarily a bad thing—the weight of the biblical evidence is upon the evangelistic work of those missionary bands following an apostolic paradigm.

Now that you know that I am not talking about church splits, let's take a look at these reasons.

THE_BIBLICAL REASON

As already noted, the Bible sets forth an example of healthy church planting. While we are not commanded to plant churches, it is an inevitable result of obedience to the Great Commission and following the apostolic pattern.

Soon after Paul and Barnabas departed Antioch on the first missionary journey, they found themselves moving from city to city. What did they do? **First**, they evangelized the people. **Second**, they gathered those new believers together to be local churches. **Third**, they departed to the next town (often because of persecution). **Fourth**, they returned to appoint elders/pastors over those churches (Acts 13-14).

Paul would also later return and visit, write letters, and send others to follow up with the churches.

THE_EVANGELISTIC REASON

Church growth studies generally show that younger churches baptize more people per church members than older, well-established congregations. As churches age, their evangelistic zeal typically declines.

One study noted, on average, evangelical churches three years of age and younger baptize **10** people for every 100 members, while churches older than 15 years of age typically baptize **three** people for every 100 members (“Churches Die with Dignity,” *Christianity Today*, January 14, 1991, 69.)

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We came to faith because of church planters. We are part of a rich history.

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Another study among Anglo churches revealed that churches 10 years old and younger baptized **10.8** people per year, per 100 members. Churches older than 10 years of age, baptized **2.5** people per year, per 100 members. (Charles, Chaney, “New Churches and the Unsaved,” *Mission USA*, January-February 1995, 12.)

According to Ed Stetzer and Warren Bird, “Among established Southern Baptist churches... there are **3.4** baptisms per 100 resident members, but their new churches average **11.7**. That’s more than three times more! Other denominations offer similar numbers” (*Vital Churches*, 25).

THE_DEMOGRAPHIC REASON

While other countries face similar diversity, let’s take North America as an example. The population of the United States recently surpassed 300 million. Canada has approximately 34 million people. Among this population are men, women, boys, and girls representing various socio-

economic and educational levels, a diversity of ages, backgrounds, and various family structures. The majority of these people live in urban areas; however, a very large percentage of the population can still be found in rural communities.

It will require new churches to reach such a great and diverse population with the Gospel.

THE_CULTURAL REASON

Again, I'll reference my area of the world. North America has a great amount of cultural diversity. A large portion of the U.S. population growth is related to immigration. The Hispanic community has now become the largest minority in the United States. Miami is a city unlike the rest of the state of Florida. New Orleans is another example of much diversity.

In places around Vancouver, you are more likely to hear Chinese than English. Toronto consists of over half, non-Canadian born citizens. In most of Quebec, French is the dominant language.

We must always preach a never-changing Gospel; however, our methods must be appropriately contextualized to the people to whom we are called. Each church has its own unique and distinct culture because of the people that make up that congregation. Such is normal. It is not always a bad thing.

However, we cannot always expect people to embrace our culture (especially our church culture) in order to hear the Gospel. Missionary work is about meeting people in the highways and hedges, sharing the truth, gathering the new believers together as a local church, and allowing the cultural expressions to develop. The only stumbling block should be the cross, not our cultural expressions of our methods.

THE_HISTORICAL REASON

I always find it humorous whenever someone tells me that “my church is a church plant.” I recognize that usually this brother or sister is attempting to communicate that their church was recently planted. The truth of the matter, however, is that every local church is a “church plant.” There was a time when the churches in a given country did not exist.

Yet, we are guilty of forgetting (and not knowing) our histories. It was because of the faithfulness of some church planters that the Holy Spirit birthed our churches. Because of a long chain of obedient disciples, the Gospel arrived in our communities, resulting in new churches. We came to faith because of church planters. We are part of a rich history.

Churches that are involved in church planting are standing on the shoulders of the faithful who have gone before us, sacrificing so that others (including us) could hear the Good News. The church that is involved in church planting communicates, “We will not allow centuries of history to stop with us. We will not allow the faithfulness and sacrifice of our brothers and sisters to stop with us. We will look beyond ourselves (if the Lord delays) to a future generation in need of this same Gospel!”

THE_ECONOMIC REASON

Clearly, some methods of church planting are very expensive endeavors. Unfortunately, in the U.S. and Canadian contexts they are the examples that get the most attention. And they are the examples that impress upon the minds that the norm must be that church planting is a costly ministry.

However, if we allow the Scriptures to provide both our definition for a local church and the principles for church planting, we soon realize that such exorbitant resources are not necessary to plant healthy churches. Evangelism that results in churches does not have to be expensive to be biblical, and thus fruitful. But know this: The money our churches invest in missionaries and resources for church planting is a very wise and necessary investment for Kingdom work. We need to be good stewards of our finances by using them for such Great Commission activity.

THE_DENOMINATIONAL REASON

Denominations go through life-cycles. Denominations that cease to plant churches today are denominations that will cease tomorrow. According to David T. Olson, 3,700 churches in the United States cease to exist at the end of every year (*The American Church in Crisis*, 146). That is over 71 churches per week.

If you are a part of a denomination, what percent of that 3,700 is from your denomination? **SR**

This article was taken from the October 11, 2010 blog post at www.jdpayne.org.

Dr. J.D. Payne is a National Missionary with the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, and an Associate Professor of Church Planting and Evangelism in the Billy Graham School of Missions and Evangelism at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, where he directs the Center for North America Missions and Church Planting.

Planting churches that last

Study the Past, Study Mistakes, and Study Others

by Dave Harvey

Study the Past

The best car I ever owned was a '72 Chrysler Valiant. My wife, Kimm, called it the "Wonder V"—as in, "I wonder why you think I want to ride in that." But it was a *tank* on tires—so solidly built, I



used it as a back-stop for pitching practice. A baseball into the side of my present car would total it.

It was a sad day when the "Wonder V" gave up the ghost. When something is solid, well-built, and passes the test of time, we need to value it.

That's the way we need to understand church planting strategies. In a world where "new" gets the buzz, we need to value that which has proven itself over time.

I'm part of a family of churches that has been planting churches for over three decades, but we're just little pups in the historical perspective. We have the well-earned reputation for being as slow as my Valiant. Much of that is because we want to build solid and build well. But we're also learning something: in order for us to move forward, we need the past.

It starts, of course, with Scripture. We look back on the priority and patterns of church planting found in the New Testament. The Great Commission, how it was understood and applied in Acts, the models that emerged, how they perpetuated themselves—this is timeless stuff! The art of church planting is to take that which the Scriptures call

valuable and build it into makes and models that fit the contexts we are trying to penetrate with the Gospel. Context matters, but that's not where we start. We start with the Scriptures.

After the Scriptures, we need to study church planting as it's been done in history. You won't find the Apostolic Fathers talking about church planting, but churches have been planted for two millennia. We need to look at how Calvin and Luther and the early Reformers recreated the church in local contexts at the dawn of the Protestant era. We need to see how the experiments in church planting that occurred among Puritans and Pilgrims worked, and didn't work.

We may be in the first generation that has begun to carve out a specific practical theology for church planting. However, like everything else we do well, somebody has worked the field before us.

Here's an example. Did you know Spurgeon had a church planting movement? The Metropolitan Tabernacle didn't just gather great numbers. It was also a church planting church.

Perhaps the most significant auxiliary work of the Pastors' College, and that which made the greatest long-lasting contribution, was the work done in church planting. Scores of churches were planted in London and throughout the country because of the College students' efforts.¹

The work wasn't simply confined to Great Britain either. This thing was global.

Spurgeon was responsible for sending men to Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Haiti, the Falkland Islands, North and South America, South Africa, Amsterdam; the ministry of the Pastors' College began to extend itself worldwide.²

Church planting is only trendy for non-readers. And you can't be a non-reading church planter. That's like being a hammerless roofer. You might stand in high places but no work really gets done.

Church planters: study and value the past. It's the path to the future.

Study Mistakes

As a teenager, my buddy fancied himself a hotshot skateboarder. Trying to do an ollie (a jump and board flip in midair) he landed badly and snapped the bone



in his arm. The real ache was six weeks of summer spent in a cast. Finally he got the cast off and... well, he immediately went back to the same spot and tried the same thing—and broke his arm. Same move, same bone, same result.

He's an adult now and he's vowed to never stand on anything that has wheels. He also has this weird place on his arm where it still feels broken when you touch it. Moral of the story is the old adage: "Those who fail to learn the lessons of history are condemned to repeat them." I like to put a *positive* spin on it: "Hey stupid—study mistakes!"

If your mission is church planting, at some point you'll encounter failure. You'll send out a guy who isn't really gifted to preach. You'll gather a team that turns out to be a collection of personal agendas. You'll underfund a work. You'll overreach your budget. You'll burn out your best servants.

All these mistakes and more have been personally authorized over the years by yours truly. Sometimes I can wonder if a successful church plant is more an accident than an action plan.

But we serve a sovereign God, and the church belongs to Him, not to us. The mission marches on; it's bigger than our mistakes. Several years ago, I was involved in bringing closure to a plant that wasn't working. The church enjoyed meaningful relationships but began to stagnate and didn't display necessary signs of ultimate viability.

In retrospect, the pastor wasn't a church planter. We sent out a guy, a team, and some cash all wrapped in serious hope. But I blundered. People were disappointed, some disillusioned. Still, it was an important lesson that helped refine the profile for our planters. It was also an opportunity to take solace in Gospel truths.

By studying our mistakes, we learned that humility and love for God were essential but not sufficient for planting. We learned the importance of the preaching gift and the essential role that a burden for evangelism plays in the heart of a planter. Learning from our failure provided opportunities for growth and improvement. It also provided an opportunity to take solace in Gospel truths.

The Cross is the answer to the biggest blunder in human history, and it is more than sufficient for any blunders we can make. In fact, the Redeemer of sinners loves to redeem the mistakes forgiven sinners make.

He loves to remind us we're not God. And He wants to teach us from the mistakes we make so we don't continually break important things that don't need to be broken.

If you are a church planter you need to have a way to mine your inevitable mistakes for wisdom. Study what's been done wrong. It will help you do it right.

Study Others



Guess what I know about you? You think that what you're involved in is the best thing God is doing right now.

You think you've got something desperately needed in the church. Of course you do. Why else would you give, serve, sacrifice for it?!

The guys over in the PCA, EV Free, SBC and Acts 29 all think the same thing. Me too. We all think we've figured it out. It's a wonderful thing about how God organizes the body of Christ. We're all part of the best thing around.

Faith for church planting assumes we believe God is at work in what we're doing. I'm not just talking about Gospel truth either, but the creation of communities with certain values. If we didn't think so we wouldn't be publishing, doing conferences, or planting churches—you know, we would work with somebody else's wheel rather than creating our own. There's a wise and understandable ambition for planting certain kinds of church to glorify God. Or to put it into church planting lingo—it's good to "promote the model distinctives."

But where that *isn't* good is when our movement becomes the mission. Seeds of dissolution get sown when "our way" becomes the "only way" or we insulate ourselves against the influence of those who build differently.

I'm not talking about doctrine here. I think most readers understand that theology informs methodology so the greater the doctrinal differences, the less we can learn from methodology. But where we have Gospel agreement, we need to learn from each other. Because the mission of the Gospel is greater than any one movement or denomination or association or network or family or partnership can possibly express.

When Paul said "the eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you'" (1 Corinthians 12:21), his instruction was just as relevant for groups as for individuals. A robust ecclesiology demands that we seek to understand what others are doing and why they are doing it.

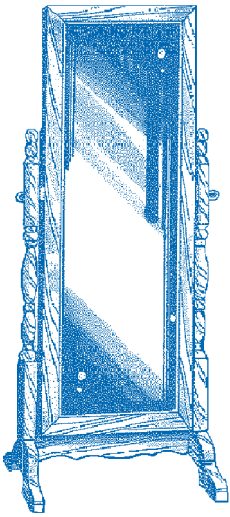
Church planters who spend their time defending their methodological turf wind up with isolated, narrow mission strategies that treat other streams as competition. And they'll miss the great opportunities for fellowship and shared mission that come from aggressively looking to learn from folks who might be doing it a bit better, or maybe more efficiently or creatively. **SR**

© 2012 Dave Harvey, used by permission. These three blogs were posted on www.desiringgod.org in February 2011.

Dave Harvey is responsible for church care, church planting, and international expansion for Sovereign Grace Ministries. He is the author of Am I Called? The Summons to Pastoral Ministry (Crossway 2012), as well as previous releases, Rescuing Ambition and When Sinners Say "I Do": Discovering the Power of the Gospel for Marriage.

¹Drummond, *Prince of Preachers*, 419.

² *Ibid.*, 413.



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*

Twain still speaks today

This past April, I was privileged to attend actor Hal Holbrook's one-man show, "Mark Twain Tonight." Holbrook first performed this back in 1954. Since then, he's done more than 2,000 performances, winning a Tony Award in 1966 and an Emmy Award in 1967.

Holbrook's portrayal of Twain [pen name for Samuel Langhorne Clemens] includes material from Twain's speeches, books and essays. Although Clemens died in 1910 at age 74, Holbrook is still going strong at 87.

One of the most fascinating aspects of having Twain come alive on stage is that his observations are still "right on target" today.

In a recent interview, Holbrook stated, "I'm using a lot of material this year that is defined by what's going on right now in our country and in our politics. It's amazing what this man [Twain] had to say more than 100 years ago, and how it feels like he is still speaking these words today."

Some of the loudest applause during Holbrook's performance occurred when he talked about the U.S. Congress and politicians. At one point "Twain" observed, "It seems to me Washington is a stud farm for donkeys."

Here are just a few of Twain's other political observations:

"Suppose you were an idiot. And

suppose you were a member of Congress. But I repeat myself."

"Fleas can be taught nearly anything that a Congressman can."

"...I never can think of Judas Iscariot without losing my temper. To my mind Judas Iscariot was nothing but a low, mean, premature Congressman."

"There is no native criminal class except Congress."

"No man's life, liberty, or property is safe while the legislature is in session."

Twain also made many witty, thought-provoking comments on a number of other issues. For example, taxes:

"The only difference between a tax man and a taxidermist is that the taxidermist leaves the skin."

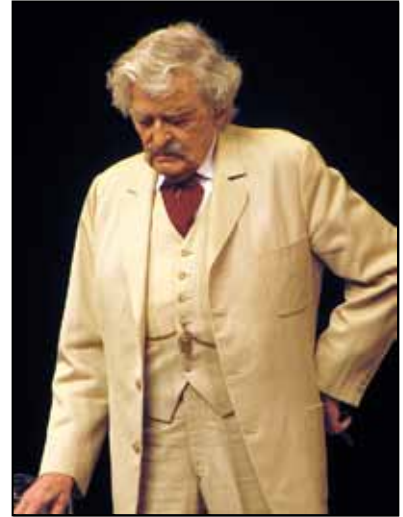
Twain saved some of his most scathing comments for organized religion:

"If the man doesn't believe as we do, we say he is a crank, and that settles it. I mean, it does nowadays—because now we can't burn him."

"The church is always trying to get other people to reform; it might not be a bad idea to reform itself a little, by way of example."

"Nothing agrees with me. If I drink coffee, it gives me dyspepsia; if I drink wine, it gives me the gout; if I go to church, it gives me dysentery."

"If Christ were here [on earth] there is one thing he would not be—a Christian."



Hal Holbrook as Mark Twain.

In 1984, Holbrook married the actor, singer, writer, and producer, Dixie Carter. Holbrook was 14 years her senior, and it was the third marriage for both. That union lasted 26 years and ended when Dixie died in 2010 of complications from endometrial cancer.

Dixie retained her mostly conservative southern and Christian roots, even in Hollywood. She was a life-long Methodist, and both her wedding and funeral were in the United Methodist Church in her hometown of McMoresville, Tenn. It was said that Dixie's "cheerful faith eventually persuaded Holbrook to join her as a regular churchgoer during their courtship and marriage."

Dixie once asked, "How come we've got to the point where Christians must apologize for being who they are? Why have Christians allowed themselves to get into the position of being the bad guys? That is a very sad turn of events, and we'd better do something about it."

Good idea, Dixie. **SR**



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

Seeking for God's pattern

by Karen Uhlich
Seattle Area SDB Church

On the last weekend of April 2012 the Seattle Area SDB Church hosted the 5th annual Northwest Association Women's Retreat. Twenty women (and three babies) attended between Friday afternoon and Sunday lunch-time. Our theme was "God's Pattern for Your Life" and the theme verse was Jeremiah 29:11.

Friday night's ice breaker game consisted of 36 questions ranging from "What is your favorite movie line?" to "What have you tried in life and simply were not good at?" After reading each question we allowed the conversation to go where it would.

We learned that someone in our group has met at least two Presidents; someone crash-landed in an airplane in "the middle of nowhere" Wyoming; and someone else likes to paint wildlife. It was fun learning these things about each other, but I think the best thing about this game was how it got everyone talking and connecting.

Theme Verse—Jeremiah 29:11
"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord

Sabbath morning, after praise and worship, we had our first break-out session where we studied the first section of our verse. We read verses throughout the Bible that told us about God creating us and creating a plan for each of us.

"plans for welfare and not for evil."

In the afternoon our second session was about God's plan for

our welfare, our well-being, and that He doesn't want evil for His people.

"to give you a future and a hope."

Sunday morning we focused on the exciting future God has for us and that God gives us blessed assurance in hope.

Each year we've studied God's Word and connected as women in a way we don't get to most of the year. For these three days we get to set aside our household responsibilities and other distractions to do what it says in Titus 2, verses 4 and 5: *Then they can urge the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.*

Our ages ranged from teenagers all the way through retired grandmothers and we all had something to learn and to teach. It's helpful to talk with others who have already dealt with the issues we are going through; we can get advice, encouragement, and just an understanding ear.

As a member of the Sandwich Generation (I have a 9-year-old at home and aging parents who need more and more of my help and attention), I get so much out of these events. Some of the other women have dealt with aging parents, and some have dealt with a pre-teen girl. (My older kids are both boys so I'm sometimes baffled.)

I'm also at that point where I'm accepting that I won't have more babies of my own, but I don't have

grandbabies yet, so I was blessed to hold a young mother's baby. She also was blessed by it, because she was able to brush her teeth without holding him. (I remember those days!)

I've been an at-home mom for most of the last 24 years, and eight years from now my youngest will graduate from high school. I know that seems like a long time away, but I'm thinking ahead about what I want to do next. During one of our free times, I sat with a group of women and talked about some ideas I have for my next career, and they were able to advise me on how to learn more about those subjects.

Although these connections and new friendships are the things I like most about our retreats, the most valuable thing I brought away from this year's time is the reminder of how much God loves me. Even when things are tough and seem too hard, He has the best plan for me. And the best part of that plan is spending eternity with Him.

I have been fortunate enough to attend every one of our retreats and I look forward to next year too! I hope you have a chance to participate in something similar in your church or Association. **SR**



Karen
Uhlich

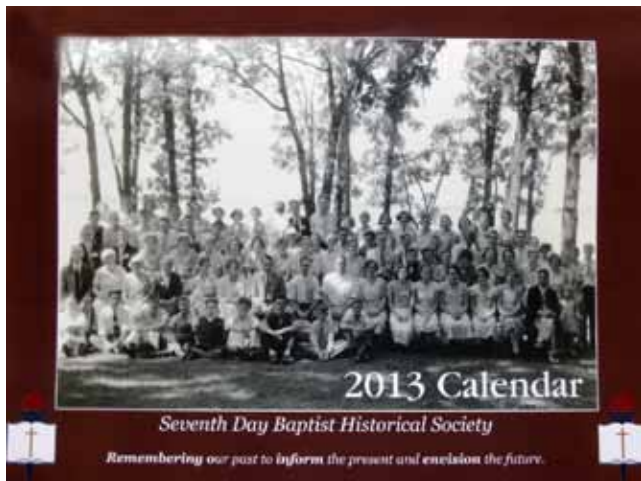


Show your love of history! New HSoc promo items

In the past several years, the Historical Society has produced a variety of promotional materials. They give those who love SDB history the opportunity to show their love while putting the SDB name in front of people and supporting the Society's work.

Most of these promotional items have been available at General Conference, but have not been advertised in any other way. This year, the Society has decided to let the entire *Recorder* audience have first crack at some of these items before they are available at General Conference!

The newest item for sale will be 2013 calendars, produced by the Society through the hard work of one of our associate directors, Elizabeth Camenga. These attractive calendars (pictured here) include full-color photographs from the Historical Society's archives. In addition, they include important dates from our shared history.



Each calendar costs \$10, plus postage if it needs to be mailed. They will also be available at the Historical Society's table at General Conference in West Virginia. A limited number of calendars are available, so get yours today!



Last year, the Society introduced T-shirts which include the SDB logo on the front and the Historical Society's new mission statement—"Remembering our past to inform the present and envision the future." The turquoise shirts are available in sizes from small to 6XL.

The T-shirts are a great way to show your love of Seventh Day Baptists and what God has done for us! As was the case with the calendars, supplies are limited. Shirts cost \$10 (\$2 extra for sizes above XL).

In addition to these items, we still have a small number of Historical Society flash drives available



for purchase for \$5. They are 512mb flash drives, which are USB 2.0 capable. They are available in blue and lime green.

If you wish to purchase any of these items before Conference, please contact the Society by phone (608) 752-5055, or by email (sdbhist@seventhdaybaptist.org) to place your order! All orders will be assessed postage based on your shipping preferences! **SR**



Pastor Appreciation can be any time

by Gordon Lawton, Dean
Director of Pastoral Services

“Brothers and sisters, we ask you to respect those who are working with you, leading you, and instructing you. Think of them highly with love because of their work. Live in peace with each other.” (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, Common English Bible)

Most of us do appreciate our pastor. But letting a pastor know of our appreciation may sometimes slip through the cracks. October is Pastor / Clergy Appreciation Month. This annual designation

is a reminder. It certainly does not prevent us from showing our appreciation at other times.

When it comes to appreciation, most people are pretty resourceful. Saying “thank you for ministering to us” can be as simple as expressing that by phone or card, or as elaborate as a banquet, special program or even a good-natured “roast.”

Sometimes we pastors are pretty dense, so if you want us to hear “You are appreciated,” try to say it so it will be heard. The internet has many ideas. Just search for “Pastor

Appreciation” or add “day” or “month” to that and you will find lots of ideas. The September 2011 SR on-line also has ideas.

Unique ways of hearing “We appreciate you, Pastor” from my own past have been: a surprise (to us) vow renewal on our anniversary; a surprise party between Sabbath School and worship for my 50th birthday, including a cane with rearview mirror; a needed raise; additional vacation granted; a Christmas Card with some cash inside. **SR**



SDB PASTOR'S RETIREMENT FUND SUPPORTING THOSE WHO GAVE SO MUCH

Rev. Edgar F. Wheeler began serving SDB churches back in 1948 while at New Orleans (La.) Baptist Seminary.

Edgar was born in Nortonville, Kansas, and married Xenia Lee Randolph in 1945. They raised 11 children: Anita Marie, Robert Edgar, Ruth Frances, Richard Lee, Helen Faith, Leon Ashby, William Raymond, Catherine Jeanne, Noelle Fountain, Esther Hope, and Ernest Paul. They now have 35 grandchildren and 31 great-grandchildren.

The Wheelers attended seminary after Edgar graduated from Salem (W.Va.) College in 1947. They served together in these churches:

- Hammond, La. (1948-50)
- Paint Rock, Ala. (1950-51)
- DeRuyter, N.Y. (1953-56)
- Salemville, Pa. (1956-58)
- Ashaway, R.I. (1958-76)
- Denver, Colo. (1976-81)
- Nortonville, Kan. (1981-86).

During “retirement,” Edgar has served as interim pastor four different times: in Lost Creek, W.Va. (twice), Salemville



Xenia Lee and Pastor Edgar Wheeler

cont. top of p. 26



A place to store and share your lessons

Have you written lessons for Sabbath School or Vacation Bible School that you'd like to share? Have you captured your Children's Messages in writing, hoping that you could let others use your ideas someday? The Board of Christian Education is working to provide a great way to share these creations on-line.

Seventh Day Baptists are a creative lot. As the *May Sabbath Recorder* showed, when given the opportunity to create new songs about the Sabbath, you responded. From music and children stories, to VBS lessons and sermons, we create new materials to meet specific needs. Sometimes, we create just because God has allowed a great idea to explode in our imagination—an idea that must come to life on paper.

Seventh Day Baptists are also a sharing lot. We like giving materials to others and using materials created by SDBs. In my travels, I've heard people express a desire to share their inspirations with a wider group of people. I've also heard many people declare that they'd really like to be using lessons written by Seventh Day Baptists.

The Board of Christian Education's website (<http://EducatingChristians.org>) is a perfect place to bring these desires together. Over the next three months (July, August, September), we will be rolling out a new section of our website dedicated to materials

written by Seventh Day Baptists.

We need your help. To make this part of the website valuable, we need Seventh Day Baptists to share. If you have created material that you'd like to share on the website, please submit it. When you do, include a note that states that you are the creator and that you give permission to the Seventh Day Baptist Board of Christian Education to publish the items on our site.

You may submit materials by e-mail. Attach your files to a message giving us permission to use them, and send them to sdbbce@EducatingChristians.org.

You may submit materials by mail. Package the materials with a cover letter that gives us permission to use them, and ship it to P.O. Box 115, Alfred Station, NY 14803. Please note that materials shipped by mail will require more time to make computer-ready and will therefore take longer to show up on the website.

As is always true with a project like this, the Board of Christian Education will exercise discretion regarding what is placed on the site and state the obvious: The SDB Board of Christian Education



is the sole decision-maker for what appears on the website. We will post materials that we think are usable and helpful. We will not post materials that seem to promote division among Seventh Day Baptists, nor will we post materials that do not seem to be in harmony with the faith and practice of our Conference of churches.

So, gather those lessons you've wanted to share out of your filing system—be it stacks of paper, manila folders, or computer files. Package them neatly into e-mails or boxes. Write a note saying that you created the materials and give the Board of Christian Education permission to use them. Then, send them our way. Thank you so much! **SR**



FOCUS on Missions

African leaders summon disciplers

by Clinton R. Brown
sdbmissions.org

Bouncing around in a rural ambulance on the back roads of Malawi, I reflected on the wish lists presented by the recent Conferences I had visited in Africa. By the way, my companions and I had not been injured; this was simply the most suitable vehicle for carrying the Malawi SDB Conference Board and myself to one of the remote SDB outposts in that part of the country.

The Board in Malawi, like other Conference Boards, hoped for help in enhancing their physical equipment for ministry with things like vehicles, communications equipment, and structures. Similarly, in western Ethiopia and South Sudan, Seventh Day Baptist believers wanted me to find help in securing land and building their first places of worship.

For some physical needs like study materials and Bibles, I assured them that I would be able to find funds and donors for those. Other big ticket items, like buildings and vehicles, we would have to assess as projects and determine where and if they would fit in our list of priorities for ministry.

The overarching desire in Malawi, Ethiopia, and South Sudan was not the physical, however. There was a plea to have theological trainers come and help equip the pastors and congregations at the level of need for their Conference. They desired to be disciplined, so that they may better disciple.

The newer Conferences felt they could not articulate well the fundamental beliefs of Seventh Day Baptists. They wanted experienced pastors to come help them with that and to find biblically sound solutions to the everyday issues they faced. The older Conference yearned for qualified pastor/teachers to supply their pastors-in-training with something closer to a genuine theological education.

I have begun work on prioritizing and promoting among our advocates and donors to partner with the overseas believers to meet the physical needs. I also

call on others to join with me in prayer, that I can begin conversations with some pastors and trained leaders (by the time we have our General Conference this year) about opportunities for living the example for our congregations and *going into all the world* as Jesus commanded.

This is a little different than what we often considered “missions” in the classic sense. This need is not a long-term commitment of evangelism across barriers of language and religion. Our objective here is to help equip our brothers so that *they* may better reach their neighbors and neighboring countries.

This mission would focus on foreign pastors and leaders who already have a fair mastery of English, consider themselves Seventh Day Baptists, and will be happy for any training even as short as a month or two weeks. Economically speaking, the longer the stay, the better the return on the expense of travel, but as they would say in Ethiopia, “a half a loaf is better than none.”

The opportunities to get involved in God’s mission to make disciples do not stop with our leaders. At our Conference table this year, and hopefully on our website soon thereafter, we will have opportunities and pledge cards so people of all walks of life can identify ways to be involved in “the mission.”

I am excited about the possibilities for the talents of Seventh Day Baptists across this Conference ministering to people from next door to around the globe. I hope you will join me in a prayer-led watch that we may be alert to answer the next call that God has for each of us. **SR**

“
They desired to be disciplined, so that they may better disciple.
”



Women in Gambela, Ethiopia worshipping in a school.



the BEACON

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

July-Aug. 2012

Going behind the Beacon

by Rebecca Olson
Berlin, N.Y.

One of our youth leaders once said to me, “The time I learn the most about what God expects of me is when I’m writing the lessons to teach all of you.”

I’ve learned that this is very true while being on this journey as Beacon editor. When you are the one doing the research, actually coming up with the ideas behind the lesson (or in my case, article), you learn a lot more than when you are simply reading it. I think this is true for a few reasons.

First, everything that goes into the article is pertinent to your life. Though there often are sermons or articles that really hit home, that doesn’t happen all the time. There are usually a few things that just don’t relate to what you’re going through at the time.

However, when you are the one doing the writing, you can make everything that you teach important to you. Everything I wrote about in the Beacon had something to do with what was going on in my life at the time. Since everything I wrote related to my own journey, I therefore absorbed the lesson better.

Now, I hope that my examples made the articles more relatable to those who read them as well, but naturally, I’m the one who could most closely identify with my articles because they were about me! I’ve found that when I can

understand something or relate to it, I am definitely more interested in learning about it, and I retain it better. Because I wrote about my own experiences, everything I wrote I had learned.

Second, you see the whole process behind the writing. For every good idea I had for an article, there were several bad ones. For every concept that made complete sense, there were at least two that never got off the ground.

Every sentence I wrote, I had to be sure to word it so that it made sense, so people could understand it. Because I saw all the wrong ideas, and all the parts of my articles that didn’t make sense, it made the finished article that much more exciting. Seeing everything about the article that went wrong helped me to appreciate the final result and better understand the ideas behind it.

Lastly—and this seems to me the most obvious—I’m the one actually formulating the ideas. I’m the one who stops and thinks, who searches the concordance for the perfect verse, who asks all the questions and finds out the answers. I see the thought process, the work that goes into the article, so I have an understanding that no one else can have just by reading it—both because I actually wrote it and because, before I wrote it, I thought it up.

I know that this article isn’t about God, nor does it really tie in to anything I’ve written before. However, when I thought about the fact that this article could be my last, what my youth leader had said just popped into my head. I have really come to understand what he meant when he said that.

I wanted people to know that I don’t just write the articles and forget them. When I’m writing them, I’m thinking about everything that I say. The things I write stick out to me because they are important to me, and in that realization, things I wanted everyone else to know.

That’s why I am so grateful for the opportunity to have edited the Beacon this year. (That, and it’s going to look great when I want to get into college!) I was given this opportunity despite the fact that I am only a freshman, and I’m really glad that I took it. It’s been a great experience.

I’m going to close my last Beacon article with my favorite verse, one that has meant so much more to me this year as I’ve stepped out in so many new ways and gotten to write about them all here. “Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.” (1 Timothy 4:12 NIV) **SR**

Active faith is stupendous for the soul

by Lena Parrish
New Auburn, Wis.



Former Secretary of State Colin Powell once said, “Always focus on the front windshield and not the rearview mirror.”

This statement unearths a true life lesson. A vehicle is properly driven when you are attentive to what’s in front of you. Where your focus is, your direction is. If you are stuck looking back you can no longer *successfully* move forward.

Making progress requires one particular virtue: faith. And then acting on that faith.

Believing in something greater than yourself produces progressiveness, whereas doubt causes a standstill. The problem with doubt is that it behaves like a weed; the moment it’s rooted it begins to multiply and choke the life of something good. It can even be detrimental to a person’s spiritual health, and can act to ensnare the oblivious.

Doubt occurs when faith is not present, just as darkness is noticed with a lack of light. Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen (Heb. 11:1). It is not based on fear.

As Christians we are instructed

to place our focus on Jesus Christ—the author and finisher of our faith (Heb. 12:2)—because *Who* we choose to trust in is the most important. And Proverbs 3:5 tells us to “Trust in the Lord with all [our] heart.”

We are not to rely on our own perception of how things should be. Instead, in everything that we do, we are to recognize that He is with us, allow Him to help us, and in turn He promises to give us the correct

guidance. Belief is fueled by hearing *and* applying.

“Faith is a sort of discipline...” (*Book of Virtues*, compiled by William J. Bennett) which combined with persevering action results in change. It all comes down to what we decide as individuals.

Choosing to believe in God’s promises, trusting another person, and believing in yourself are all crucial choices in life. Your response shapes who you are, how you act toward others and how you view life specifically and in general.

You can end up in very different places in your journey depending on what or whom you choose to believe... or not believe. The choice is yours alone.

Perhaps God wants to transform your hidden doubt into obvious faith. Remember to face the windshield, and hang onto faith. You won’t regret it. **SR**

Director of Emerging Media

The SDB Conference is looking for a **Director of Emerging Media**. This part-time position will be responsible for development across multiple platforms of media, like Facebook and Twitter, and also up-and-coming platforms. The Director will form and implement strategies and partnerships to position Seventh Day Baptists into emerging technologies, markets, and content distribution platforms.

A qualified candidate should have a Bachelor’s degree in Business, Marketing, or a related field.

For complete details on the job description, please e-mail the Executive Director, Rob Appel, at robappel@seventhdaybaptist.org. Your request will be kept confidential.



Buckhannon, WV July 29–Aug. 4, 2012



The President's Page
by John Pethtel

Are you ready to revitalize your church?

Thanks to the help and support of the SDB Missionary Society, I am very excited to have two special guests come to speak and minister to us at Conference. Rev. Brian Croft and Dr. Howard Bixby will address the crucial topics of church revitalization and church planting.

Brian Croft is Senior Pastor of Auburndale Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky. He is the husband of Cara and adoring father of four children, Samuel, Abby, Isabelle, and Claire. He has served in pastoral ministry for over 15 years and is currently in his eighth year as pastor at Auburndale. He was educated at both Belmont University and Indiana University receiving his B.A. in Sociology. He also undertook some graduate work at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Brian is the author of *Visit the Sick: Ministering God's Grace in Times of Illness* and *Test, Train, Affirm, and Send into Ministry: Recovering the Local Church's Responsibility to the External Call*. Both of these volumes are published by Day One in their book series designed to serve pastors, church leaders, and those training for local

church ministry. Brian has also published *Help! He's Struggling with Pornography*; *Conduct Gospel-centered Funerals* (co-written with Phil Newton), and *A Faith That Endures: Meditations on Hebrews 11*. Brian blogs consistently at PracticalShepherding.com and is a guest blogger at both The Gospel Coalition and 9 Marks websites.

Dr. Howard Bixby is the Executive Vice President of ChristWay Ministries. He is deeply involved in assisting churches and pastors with strategic planning, consulting, and helping develop churches with a passion for Biblical outreach and growth. He has practiced what he teaches. As an adult Sunday School class, Adult Bible Fellowship, and Home Bible Study teacher for over 40 years, he has seen hundreds of people enter the church through his classes. The principles are applicable to any situation or size church.

Dr. Bixby's ministry experience enables him to bring insights, encouragement, and change to churches. In his 19 years as a pastor, his church grew dramatically and developed a worldwide impact. While he served as Seminary Dean

and instructor for 22 years, Baptist Bible Seminary likewise developed and grew. His ministry philosophy prioritizes the "Great Commission," dynamic Biblical leadership, and life-changing discipleship.

He is also the founder of Project Jerusalem which partners with local churches and mission agencies to plant churches in the northeastern United States. Dr. Bixby continues to serve as a consultant to church plants and planting teams. He brings a lifelong interest and wealth of experience in outreach, church growth, and leadership to church planting.

Having lived and ministered in both rural and city settings, Howard and his wife, Carol, have four children and 17 grandchildren. The two sons and a son-in-law are in pastoral ministry as well.

I encourage you all to register and attend this summer's Conference sessions to be challenged, to be refreshed, and to be encouraged to serve the Kingdom with more vigor, a renewed purpose and a new perspective.

We are excited to place an emphasis on church planting and revitalization during this year's session. If that is an area of ministry that you are being called to explore or discover or have questions about, please contact the Center office, the Missionary Society, or myself so that we can be praying for you and include you in these discussions.

We look forward to seeing you for the *ARE YOU READY?* conversation at West Virginia Wesleyan College in Buckhannon, WV from July 29-August 4, 2012. **SR**



by Executive Director
Rob Appel

But wait... there's MORE!

During my 2008 Executive Director's address to the Conference, I said that "Our Conference theme is unique in the fact that whether we are hungry or not, God is always Limitless. Therefore it matters more what we do in response to God's calling, urging or pushing; and not what God's response is to us."

I also stated that the Seventh Day Baptist Conference of churches was growing, and during that growth we had become more diverse in our ethnic make-up. We had grown from 68 member churches to 72. As of today we are back down to 68 due to four churches no longer in existence.

The population of the United States in 2008 was around 305 million people. Today it is just under 312 million, with the top 50 metropolitan areas in the U.S. totaling 165 million people. In those top 50 cities we do not have a presence in 30 of them: Chicago, Boston, Detroit, San Francisco, Phoenix, Minneapolis, San Diego, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Orlando, San Antonio, Kansas City, Las Vegas, San Jose, Indianapolis, Norfolk, Charlotte, Austin, Milwaukee, Jacksonville, Memphis, Louisville, Richmond, Oklahoma City, Hartford, Buffalo, Birmingham, Salt Lake City, Raleigh, and New Orleans. The total population in these 30 metro areas is over 70 million people!

In Canada the population was about 32 million in 2008, and today is over 34 million. Of the top 10 cities in Canada we have churches in one, Toronto. These nine other cities have a total of 11 million people!

As stated earlier, we have become more diverse in our Conference's ethnic make-up. Here in the United States our population trends will tell us that we need to be more proactive among the Spanish-speaking community. Projections point to 60 million Hispanics in the USA by the year 2020.

The reason I shared these statistics four years ago was so we would try to become more intentional about planting churches. I wanted us to look at larger cities and prime locations.

Callers to the SDB Center ask where the closest SDB church is to them. It's hard telling someone in Richmond, Virginia that the closest church is over 100 miles away. Or Phoenix, Arizona's closest church is over 300 miles away; and Boise, Idaho that their closest church is 400 miles away! And if you are in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, the closest church is over 12 hours away... and it isn't even in Canada!


In the 1970s and '80s the Conference came together and agreed to help plant churches in urban areas. Some of those churches are the New York City church in Brooklyn in

1974; Houston, Texas 1977; Columbus (now Pataskala), Ohio 1976; Central Maryland and Portland, Oregon in 1978; and Philadelphia, Metro Atlanta, and Miami all in 1982. These churches are all still in existence today!

We had a successful church plant program! So, what is it that you and your church can do?

In 1991 a ministry called "MORE 2000" helped to lead churches to discover what their purpose was, and set into motion ministry achievements that the local church didn't know they were capable of. The "Mission Of Revival and Evangelism" was accomplished through commitment and a unified body of believers who were focused on a purpose for their church and their communities.

The year 2000 had come and gone. The name changed from "MORE 2000" to "SDB C.P.R." We are changing it again, to simply MORE. Why? Because God has MORE for us to do. And as we plant churches, we need to be MORE in touch with each other through commitment, purpose, and revival.

If you are a church that is MORE in tune to what you can do in your community, then you will be MORE ready to plant a church. I have said it before and I will say it again, "You know your church is mature when it starts having babies." 



Must be seen to be believed?

by Morgan Shepard

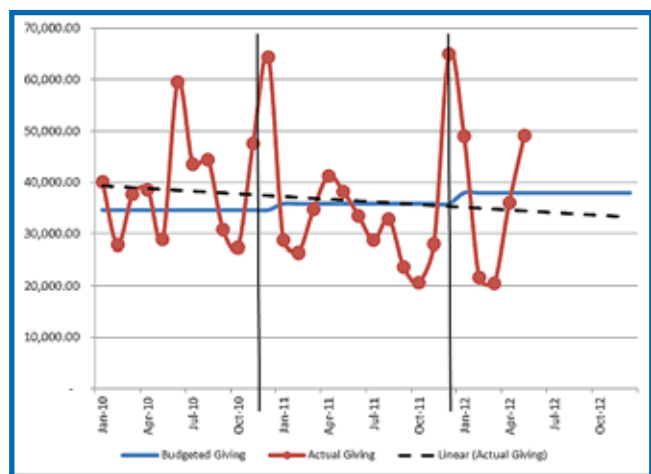
If we look back to 2010 you can see we have one to two spikes a year which carries us during the “valley” periods. In 2011 we really didn’t get those “spikes.” We are doing better so far in 2012. Now let’s drill down a little deeper and see where the gifts are going.

“... as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.” (2 Corinthians 4:18 ESV)

As stated before, I’m a “numbers guy.” I like to see the numbers for myself. It’s not that I don’t believe you, it’s just that I must “trust, but verify.”

Numbers tell a story. They tell where your money comes from and where your money goes. The old adage of “Look at someone’s checkbook and I can tell you what is important to them” comes to mind. Admittedly, that’s not the whole story but you need to start somewhere.

As we get ready to head to Conference let’s take a look at the General Conference numbers. First the “long view”—what I call the “Heart Beat Chart.”



Total Giving 2010-2012

Agency	Total Giving Thru May		
	2012	2011	Diff.
B. Christ. Ed.	\$ 15,100	\$ 15,864	\$ (764)
C. On Ministry	41,934	28,295	13,638
Conf. Services	56,337	55,096	1,242
Historical Soc.	2,113	1,855	258
Missionary Soc.	14,064	12,239	1,825
AST&CC	16,080	13,013	3,067
Women’s Soc.	16,313	12,052	4,262
Sub Total	\$ 161,941	\$ 138,413	\$ 23,528

Overall total giving is up over the same period last year, with most of the Boards and Agencies experiencing an increase. [Editor’s note: Please remember to support the *Sabbath Recorder* with the recent mailing!] Most of these increases are due to responses to specific programs: Ministerial student fund raising, SCSC and Stained Glass... THANK YOU!

Your response to the Pastor’s Retirement Fund has also made a difference. We continue to be able to meet our current retirement obligations to the 11 retirees. Please consider honoring those who served us faithfully for so many years. (See pages 15 and 26.)

Please know that all your gifts are truly appreciated. We continually look for ways to be good stewards of what God has provided. We also need your feedback on how we can better serve you and your church.

While what we see in the numbers encourages us to continue, it is really our faith in the unseen reward of eternal life with God that keeps us going.

See you at Conference! **SR**

Church faces challenges with faith

by David Taylor

On July 22, 1978, the Central Maryland SDB Church was born—a dream conceived long before in the minds of the Washington, D.C., Church pastors and members. With the help of South Jersey SDB Churches and the Eastern Association, the D.C. Church launched the project by commissioning four families to begin the work. God blessed this little branch with fruit and it grew to produce more fruit.

Through the past 36 years there have been seasons of plenty and seasons of drought but God has preserved Central Church. Lacking property of their own, the congregation has met regularly as tenants of Hope Presbyterian Church in Mitchellville, Md. During those years they nurtured their own dreams of having a church home someday. In the meantime, many families and individuals have come and gone from this little congregation. A few have gone on to become ministers carrying the Gospel to other places.

Due to recent events, the elusive dream has begun to take shape. The property of Pratt (“Jim”) and Rose Chroniger has been the scene of many of Central Church’s activities and an integral part of its extended ministry. With family grown and gone, and health issues limiting them, the Chronigers find the property too much work for them alone.

They are ready to downsize, but God is not finished with their Tuc-A-Way home. He has given Central a fresh vision for the home they’ve longed for; a vision so big it must be shared. To confirm the vision, a feasibility study was done to see if a church would fit on the property and meet the requirements of both



Architectural renderings of the Central Church building and floor plan.


church and county codes. The answer was “Yes!”

The church voted to purchase the land. As a step of faith, the congregation met at Tuc-A-Way for a prayer and praise service to dedicate the property to God and the ongoing ministry of Central. Over 25 people gathered that cold rainy morning. Carrying umbrellas, we walked the boundaries and gathered in the staked off area where the sanctuary was envisioned to be.

Time has passed and funds spent to solidify the vision. A due diligence study brought more positive results and cleared the way for the next step, purchasing the property. Our mountain is high, the road steep, and the steps are many, but the goal

is to further the dream launched by the D.C. Church years ago through those four families who became Central SDB Church.

Our desire is to follow God’s leading and build a living church that will carry out His plan of ministry for Central at Tuc-A-Way. We have architectural drawings to depict our vision. Fundraisers are underway and some will be displayed on our Conference table in West Virginia. Learn more on Central’s webpage at centralsdbchurch.org. For those interested, a small book has been compiled to relate the story of Central Church and Tuc-A-Way.

We covet the prayer support of our friends and SDB family everywhere and may God receive the glory. 

Tributes to Nedd Chitekwe Lozani (1947-2012)

On March 21 of this year Seventh Day Baptists lost a dedicated leader and I lost a dear friend, who went to be with the Lord on that day. Nedd Lozani was just 65 years old.

He had a very fruitful life. While still employed by the Mobil Oil Company, he served the Central Africa Conference as chairman of their Board of Trustees, and upon his retirement in 2004 was asked to be the General Secretary of the Conference.

In 2008 he and his wife Alefa attended the sessions of the SDB World Federation where he was elected to be the Federation Vice President for Africa. In that role he fielded an endless stream of communications, hosted Federation visitors to Malawi, and visited and conducted training sessions in SDB Conferences of Mozambique, Burundi, and Zambia.

Nedd's death is a great loss for the Central Africa Conference, the SDB World Federation and for all Seventh Day Baptists. We are already missing his efficient communication links and his thoughtful, wise counsel. May he truly rest with God.

(Dale D. Thorngate, President, SDB World Federation)

Nedd Chitekwe Lozani was a servant of God in the Central Africa Conference of Seventh Day Baptists.

Nedd was born February 9, 1947, the youngest son in a pastor's family. Pastor Chitekwe Lozani served Michizu Church in Thyolo District of southern Malawi. There Nedd spent his childhood living, playing, and learning in the African village. For some of his middle school years he studied at Makapwa Mission School, living in the boarding units.

His parents must have recognized his potential, for after completing secondary school, he enrolled in the Polytechnic, a division of the University of Malawi. After his



Nedd Lozani

graduation, he was employed by Mobil Oil Company for over 32 years. He no doubt was recognized as a valuable employee, was given the Sabbath off, and held various managerial positions until his retirement in 2003.

While in the Polytechnic, he began attending our Blantyre Church and continued faithfully as a part of that body of believers for over 40 years. For many years, Brother Nedd taught the youth Sabbath School class. (If there had been a Malawian Crystal Apple award for Sabbath School teachers, he would have been the first recipient.)

He was not only active in his church, but an active participant in the Central Africa Conference of Seventh Day Baptists and was elected to their Board of Trustees. Numerous times he was chosen as chairman of the Board, thus handling important matters for the Conference as well. Brother Lozani was a proficient translator

of English into the local language for visitors and missionaries. He also was on occasion appointed as Internal Auditor.

Once when Nedd was present in a teaching session, the Bible was presented as a library with the categories of books of law, history, poetry, prophecy, epistles, etc. Though it seemed a helpful way of thinking to the teacher, to Mr. Lozani it wasn't a library but the very Word of God.

As General Secretary of the Conference, he was efficient, timely in carrying out his duties, and dealt with all in a congenial and loving way.

He and his wife Alefa represented their Conference well in the U.S. in 2008 and 2011. While in the States, they visited several churches where they told of God's work through Seventh Day Baptists in Malawi. They were a blessing to those churches and the homes and families with whom they stayed.

Nedd C. Lozani's death on March 21, 2012, came as a severe loss for which none of us were ready. Let us continue to pray for Alefa, his adult children and families, and the Central Africa Conference where his passing is keenly felt. **SR**

(Rev. David and Mrs. Bettie Pearson, longtime Missionaries to the Central Africa Conference)



SDB Missionary Society Executive Clint Brown had the honor of visiting Nedd Lozani's grave on a recent trip to Africa. Along with widow Alefa is Nedd's daughter Nancy and two grandsons.

Marriages

Monroe – Palmer. Seth Thomas Monroe and Sara Lynn Palmer were married on March 24, 2012 at Highway Baptist Church, North Little Rock, AR. Pastor Jeffrey Monroe officiated.

Williams – Cagney. Jayson Williams and Sarah Cagney were married on March 25, 2012 at the Milton (WI) SDB Church. Rev. Dave Flood officiated.

Sonntag – Groelle. Jeffrey Sonntag and Lacey Groelle were married on May 19, 2012 at the Milton (WI) SDB Church. Rev. George Calhoun officiated.

Lima – Heath. Thomas Lima and Katie Heath were married on May 26, 2012 at the Milton (WI) SDB Church. Rev. George Calhoun officiated.

Births

Crouch.—A son, Abel Chai, was born to Rick and Grace (Camenga) Crouch of Lawton, OK on April 27, 2012.

Rogers.—A daughter, Brynnie Rogers, was born to Hannah Rogers of Kearney, NE on May 1, 2012.

Nieman.—Twin daughters, Kaidynce Joy and Evelyne Adaelaide-Rose were born to Jesse and Brittany (Brazil) Nieman of Janesville, WI on June 12, 2012.

Death Notices

Eldon D. Ingraham, 60, of North Loup, NE, died on April 19, 2012.

Dorotha Ellen (Payne) Shettel, 96, of Sydney, Australia, died on May 31, 2012.

Bonnie B. (Babcock) Keown Severance, 81, of North Loup, NE, died on June 4, 2012.

* * * * *

Pastoral Changes

Named:

Robert Nakamoto at
Faith Fellowship, Nashville TN

Retired:

John Bevis, Perry Cain,
Harold King

Resigned:

Bill Burks, Stan Fox

Directions to WV Wesleyan College

General Conference is July 29 – August 4

Buckhannon is just over 2 hours south of Pittsburgh, Pa., and about 90 minutes north of Charleston, W.Va.

The best way to drive there is to:

- ✓ Take I-79 to Exit 99, then east on US-33. (It's 12 miles from I-79 to Buckhannon.)
- ✓ Exit US-33 at Main St. Exit (exit on right).
- ✓ Make a right off exit and drive 1/2 mile into downtown.
- ✓ Turn right at third stoplight onto S Florida St.
- ✓ Follow S Florida St 1/2 mile to College Ave.
- ✓ Turn left at stop sign onto College Ave.

For Registration on July 29:

Continue straight 1/2 block on College Ave. past Meade St.

Registration is at the Virginia Thomas Law Center on your left.

(Look for SDB Conference Registration signs)

To get to Benedum Campus Center:

(back to last check mark) From College Ave. turn right at stop sign onto Meade St.

Follow Meade St. to stop sign; turn left onto Camden Ave.

Campus Center will be on your left.



Conference Travel!!

NEW THIS YEAR: There will be a **Pick-up FEE** for transportation between **Charleston, W.Va.** and Buckhannon.

The fee will be **\$35** one-way;
\$50 round-trip.

Retirement Fund, *cont. from p. 15*

and Ashaway. The Wheelers have lived in five different states during retirement, currently in Virginia.

Edgar also served on the SDB Missionary Society Board (President in 1975-76) and on the SDB Council on Ministry for several terms (Chairman 1992-98).

His non-ministry experience included work as a printer and linotype operator for newspapers and publishing houses. Edgar served as Conference President in 1970, and Xenia Lee was given the Women's Society Robe of Achievement in 1987.

This precious couple hopes to continue to receive monthly payments from the "old" Pastor's Retirement Fund. Please honor them by contributing toward the giving campaign. (See box, right.) Thank you, and God bless you! **SR**

Don't forget the **Pastor's Retirement Fund** goal of raising an additional \$25,000 in 2012. Just over \$14,250 has been raised through May.

Would you be a monthly giver? Send your tax-deductible gifts to the **SDB Center** (address on p. 3) or call to arrange an automatic gift. Make your check payable to **COSAR**, with "Pastor's Retirement Fund" in the memo line. Thank you so much!

Ladies only—

Heading to Conference at WVa Wesleyan?

Plan to come to the

Women's Banquet on Wednesday, August 1

You can expect a great meal, great fellowship, great program with some of the greatest women this side of "almost Heaven"!

Only \$11 above your regular meal ticket; \$20 if you don't have a meal ticket

Dress up and smile for the paparazzi!

Conference Camping Options

Audra State Park

(Barbour County, WV)
30-40 minutes from campus
67 Sites; No Hookups; \$20
304-457-1162
Audrasp@wv.gov
www.audrastatepark.com

WV Wesleyan campus

20 sites available; electric only
Showers available in dorm
\$10 per night
Use Conference on-line registration at
seventhdaybaptist.org

Zickafoose Mobile Home Park

5 minutes from campus
Full Hookup
2 people, \$20 per night
Each add'l person,
\$4 per night
Dump Station
(non-campers) \$5
Water Tank fill-up \$5
304-472-3646

Broken Wheel Campground

(Weston, WV)
20 minutes from campus
Water & 30-amp service
4 persons, \$27

Dump Station available
Honey Wagon \$10
304-269-6097
email@CAMPBWC.com

Stonewall Resort

(Roanoke, WV)
30-40 minutes from campus
Six 50-amp sites;
34 30-amp sites
Full Hookup:
Su-W \$39/nt.; Th-Sa \$42/nt.
Seniors 10% off
304-269-7400
stonewallinfo@benchmark
management.com

KEVIN'S

ORNER

How about a weekend off? (or, Plan A turns to Plans D, E...)

Following a busy streak of preaching weekends and Wednesday evening Lenten services (on top of my “day job”), I was sorely feeling the need for a weekend break at the end of March.

After making arrangements for a guest preacher, I planned to attend a Michael Card Bible conference in Bloomington, about 3 hours south in Illinois.

That was **Plan A**.

Then I learned that son Matt, Danielle and their boys would be coming from far southern Illinois, passing through our home in Janesville, on their way to meet

friends for a getaway in Wisconsin Dells—on that same weekend!

Already registered and paid for the conference, I decided to stick with my plan. But **Plan B** gave me hope of seeing the growing grandkids. Grandma Janet (my beloved) would ride back to southern Illinois with the kids and I could meet them all at their place about two hours south of Bloomington. Then, Janet and I would come home in my car. Awesome idea!

It got even better for my wife. The kids decided that Janet could meet them up in the Dells for part of the stay, enjoy the water park and have more time together before heading south. **Plan C**—perfect.

Part way through Plan C, other things started heading south. The morning after I arrived in Bloomington, my back went out, causing discomfort during the seminars and discussion times. (I still learned much and appreciated the fine teaching.) The family members up in the Dells had a fun time.

Janet was back at the Milton church, serving as facility coordinator for a wedding (nothing else to do that weekend) when she got a phone call. Our firstborn, Jenny, was pretty sure she was having contractions for her firstborn—about 10 days before her due date!

So Grandma had to make a tough decision. After repacking a suitcase at home, instead of being one of five passengers heading straight south for 5 hours, Janet kissed the grandsons goodbye, got in her car and drove herself to the southwest toward Moline. She wound up at Jenny's side in about two hours. Enter **Plan D** (as in daughter having a daughter).

The string of text messages over the next 7 hours

made my head spin. Janet provided updates on Jenny's progress, such as: 6:20 pm—“Missed the window for epideral... Still doing great.” 6:43 pm—“Breaking water right now!”

In the meantime, Matt, Danielle and the boys started heading back to their home and realized that they could stop to see “Papa” for supper in Bloomington. Additional texts came from Danielle about the time of their arrival and choosing a place to eat—as in **Plan E**.

Did I mention that I was also using this getaway to work ahead on some sermons??

7:00 pm—“Sleeping between contractions... She's not even moaning!”

Did I mention that there was a Michael Card musical concert to wind up the Conference weekend that evening? Yeah—not going. (**Plan F** for family.)

8:02 pm—“Trying different position... She's very tired. Still no urge to push. Keep praying.”

After numerous texts from Danielle, we met at the local Culver's. Had a great time with the gang, along with more texts from Janet.

8:59 pm—“Standing and rocking. Stronger contractions so might be soon.”

I couldn't imagine this kind of communication when Jenny was born three decades ago.

With a late supper and more texts consumed, I hugged and kissed the “Illinois Butlers” and they kept driving southward. For me, back to the hotel.

10:10 pm—“Still no. I hope they let her push soon.”

10:47 pm—“She's so tired. It's close. About to start pushing.”

Why does this sermon I'm writing seem so disjointed?

10:53 pm—“This is hard to watch!”

11:01 pm—“Saw the top of head.”

11:10 pm—“So close. Doctor here.”

11:18 pm—“She's here”

Tears of joy from this Papa. Now I *want* more texts! “5 lbs 13.5 oz” Yes... “18 inches.” Yes... “Tiny but looks ok.”

PHOTO arrives on the phone!! Replies pour in from siblings. More tears from Papa.

A call by speakerphone revealed a beautiful name for a beautiful girl: Leah Grace. The next day I got to hold our latest miracle. (**Plan G** as in gorgeous granddaughter.) What a whirlwind!

Um, so I'm thinking twice before asking for another “weekend off.”



Calling all artists, ages 4 to 12!

Enter the Sabbath Recorder Thanksgiving Cover Contest



Do you like to draw? We need you!
Young Seventh Day Baptist artists
are asked to draw a picture (freehand)
about THANKSGIVING, or the reasons
we celebrate the holiday.

The overall winner's drawing
will appear on the cover of the
November 2012 *Sabbath Recorder*.

Other winners, by age category (4-6, 7-9, 10-12),
will appear inside the same issue.



The artwork needs to be:

- Original and unassisted (except for encouragement).
- Crayon, marking pens, paints, or pencil drawings are accepted. Computer-generated artwork or coloring book prints will not be accepted.
- All artwork is to be drawn on 8-1/2 x 11-inch white paper.
- Entries need to be vertical and should not be matted or mounted.
- Do not include a child's name or other information on the artwork. The words "Thanksgiving" or "Thanks" may appear in the artwork.
- Entries need to be submitted through a child's Sabbath School teacher.
- On a separate piece of paper **print** the following information and attach it to the back of the artwork:
 - Name of the child
 - Age of the child
 - Name of the church they attend
 - Name and telephone number of the Sabbath School teacher submitting the artwork.

Mail your entry to:

The SDB Center
PO Box 1678
Janesville WI 53547

Deadline: *All entries need to be postmarked no later than September 10, 2012.* They may be submitted any time prior to that date.

Please put your entry in a large enough envelope

so that there are no creases in the artwork. Adding a heavier piece of paper or cardboard will help. Then write "Please do not bend or fold" on the outside of the envelope.

If you have any questions, contact us at editor@seventhdaybaptist.org or call (608) 752-5055.

Note to Sabbath School teachers: Please help promote this contest.