



The Sabbath RECORDER

March 2013

News for and about Seventh Day Baptists

Developing our Leaders



**Let's do
Blunch! p.4**

**Be a Timothy,
Pursue a Paul p.6**

**Investing for
Eternity p.9**



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

Flying to Conference?



Our 2013 General Conference will be held on the campus of the University of Colorado in Colorado Springs. The Host Committee will provide transportation to the campus from Colorado Springs Airport.

If you choose Denver International Airport instead, you may arrange a ride with the Colorado Springs Shuttle (\$50 one way/\$90 RT) to the Academy Hotel where we can pick you up. For shuttle service info please go to www.coloradoshuttle.com or call 877-587-3456.

See page 23 for more Conference info.

Robe of Achievement 2013 Nominations

The Robe of Achievement Committee of the SDB Women's Society is seeking nominations of a woman who is a member of an SDB Church and has had an influence or contributed "beyond the limits of her own community and church."

A complete resume must be submitted containing a life history including her achievements and activities.

Deadline is **March 31, 2013**. (No need to wait until the last minute—we'll accept your submission any time!) If you would like to re-nominate someone whom you have nominated within the last 2 years, you do *NOT* have to complete a new resume form. Simply notify Karen Payne (email below) that you wish to re-nominate the person and send any updates to the previously completed resume.

Submit the Robe resumes to:

Karen Payne

13528 595th Street, Claremont MN 55924

Or, by email to: karenpayne@hotmail.com

*A nomination form is available
at SDBWomen.org*



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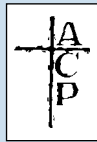


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ⓔ = Editor's Circle members

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Let's do Blunch!

by Pastor
Matthew Olson
Berlin, N.Y.

On my office wall there is a plaque that reads, “The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2, NASB).

I first memorized that verse in the early '90s while preparing to teach a discipleship program. The training was based on Colossians 2:7, “...having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude.”

Twenty years later I found myself studying *Breakout Churches*, authored by Thom Rainer, with our church moderator and licensed preachers. During that study, my passion for discipleship was rekindled. Through the Holy Spirit, I came to understand that my calling as pastor in Berlin is to equip others in our church for leadership. Thus, from the study of that book our “Preacher’s Blunch” was born.

I did not originate the word **blunch**—a portmanteau combining the words *book* and *lunch*. “Blunch” was coined by a local school teacher who rewards her students by allowing them to meet with her, to enjoy lunch together while also discussing a book they are both reading.

I found that the word describes perfectly my vision for mentoring the preachers in our church—meeting with me after Sabbath School for about



The word describes perfectly my vision for mentoring the preachers in our church—eating lunch and studying books to help them improve their gifts.

an hour, eating lunch and studying books to help them improve their gifts.

The original focus of our Preacher’s Blunch was training and equipping those who are licensed by our church to preach. In our first meetings we spent our time studying practical topics such as how to write a sermon, the characteristic of effective pastors, and how to lead the church to growth. On

occasion we were joined by another local pastor, or by church members who might benefit from a specific topic.

As the group continued to meet, however, I realized that it could be an effective way to disciple not only the preachers in our church, but any church member who showed leadership potential. I began to expand the study topics and invited young men whom I felt God had called to leadership to join the Blunch.

The purposes of the Preacher's Blunch expanded.

We were to disciple and equip not only pastors, but also leaders. We began to study books like *Grasping God's Word* authored by J. Scott Duval and J. Daniel Hays, a college-level course designed to help attendees read, interpret, and apply the Bible. We also studied systematic theology using *Christian Beliefs* by Wayne Grudem.

Expanding the reading materials has led the group in all sorts of interesting directions. For example, we recently discussed how a leader in the church might confront a practicing atheist. Specifically we talked about one of the most common objections atheists have to Christianity—the belief that the Bible is untrustworthy.

This brief study was just a prelude to what comes next for the group, however. Over the next several months we will explore ways in which a church leader might confront a *practical* atheist.

Several recent books by authors such as Francis Chan, Craig Groeschel, and Kyle Idleman have addressed this issue. At least two of them, *Christian Atheists* by Groeschel and *Not a Fan*, by Idleman, have been used in one or more of our Sabbath School classes. The authors' concern is simply this: most

folks, even those who attend church on a regular basis, believe in God but act as if He doesn't exist. That is, they know there is a God but don't allow that reality to impact their lives.

We aren't surprised that this is true of people who don't attend church. If the same holds true for many who have professed faith in Christ and attend church, however, it's not only surprising, but deeply troubling.

As our group discusses how we might lead others to take their faith seriously, we

will be exploring what Mark Devers considers the nine marks of the church and the corresponding marks for church members. We plan to share what we learn with the entire congregation through a series of articles in our church's monthly newsletter. [Editor's note: *Hmm... I wonder if we could "borrow" those articles for the SR?*]

These articles will explain the nine marks and will reflect on what we have learned within the Preacher's Blunch group. The goal of these articles is to teach others that they too might deepen their knowledge and understanding of who God is, and thus grow more and more like Christ—the head of His body, the church—in every way.

Not every Seventh Day Baptist church has implemented (nor do they need) something like our Preacher's Blunch. But I do believe that every Seventh Day Baptist church has a responsibility to train its leadership, that they might be able to disciple those who belong to the church.

Our model for doing that is just one among many. I encourage you to explore the various ways in which your church might entrust what you have learned to faithful men. **SR**

“Every SDB church has a responsibility to train its leadership, that they might be able to disciple those who belong to the church.”

Books mentioned in the article:

Breakout Churches by Thom Rainer. (Zondervan, 2004)

Christian Atheists by Craig Groeschel. (Zondervan, 2011)

Christian Beliefs by Wayne and Eliot Grudem. (Zondervan, 2005)

Grasping God's Word, 2nd edition by J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays. (Zondervan, 2005)

Not a Fan by Kyle Idleman. (Zondervan, 2011)

Be a Timothy, Pursue a Paul

by Dusty Mackintosh
Thornton, Colo.

God gave me an incredible gift. I am writing to make you jealous. More about that later.

I was studying 2 Timothy (you know, the Bible) and I was struck by something odd. The advice, the encouragement and the teaching were all familiar to me, but my image of Timothy suddenly shifted.

Timothy was not a young teenager. If church tradition is accurate in relating his death in 97 AD (around 80 years old), Timothy would be somewhere in his 40s at the time of the writing of 1st and 2nd Timothy. Further, he is a church leader, possibly already the bishop of Ephesus. In short, he is a mature and successful leader in the church.

He still had a mentor

Yet, Paul clearly continues his role of *mentor*—passing on advice, wisdom and expertise to Timothy, counseling him through



the challenges of life and ministry. The word *mentor* is something of a buzzword this last decade, but the apprenticeship model it describes is ancient. I encountered this word constantly as a youth, young

adult, youth minister and seminarian, always with the image of the young up-and-comer being brought along by the sage who has traveled the road before. This is certainly mentoring.

The picture presented by Paul and Timothy is that of an ongoing, long-term mentoring relationship. Timothy did not stop needing mentoring once he had achieved success in church leadership. Indeed, Timothy apparently had the wisdom to realize he needed a mentor more than ever.

Standing on two pillars

Paul writes to remind Timothy that he can persevere in terrible times among terrible people because he stands on two pillars. Timothy can persevere because he knew the Holy Scriptures from infancy, and because he *knew* those from whom he learned it (2 Tim. 3:14-15).

Far from least among those “from whom he learned it” was his mentor, Paul. Timothy knew “all about [Paul’s] teaching, way of life, purpose, faith, patience, love endurance, persecutions,

sufferings...” (2 Tim. 3:10-11)

It was like Paul was saying, “You, Timothy, know all about my teaching, my conduct, my purpose, faith...” This is what Timothy knows. The word here is also “you followed” or “you have investigated and examined thoroughly.” I love this definition: “following a teaching which has been grasped.”

Paul, in essence, tells Timothy, “You learned the things I said, the way I lived, my purpose, the things I believed, the ways I behaved (patience, love, endurance), the things I endured (persecutions, sufferings), and you really got it. You understood, and you followed me in those things.”

The content and context

So the **content** of what Timothy learned was Christian doctrine and Christ-like living. The **context** of what Timothy learned was in the footsteps of Paul’s life and ministry. This was a pillar of Timothy’s life and faith, and yet the mentoring was not over. The books of 1 and 2 Timothy are an act of ongoing mentoring. What an incredible gift Timothy had in Paul.

Here’s my question: What was it about Timothy that allowed Paul to speak these words of encouragement, even when he could have considered himself “graduated” from Paul’s tutelage? More personally, will anyone be able to write a letter like that to me?

You are responsible to pursue and learn from godly people. God has placed those people in your life.

Tradition has Timothy mid-40s or so at the time of this letter. In 15 years, when I am bishop of Ephesus, who will write me and say: “Dusty, you have watched me, you know what I have taught, the way I have lived, what I believe, how I have treated other people... You have watched my own godly life in action. I know you are in terrible times—keep going! Why? Because you have known those who have taught you (like me), and of course you know the power and wisdom of the Scriptures to lead you to salvation in Christ.”

My mentors

Do I know those who have taught me? Do I know their teaching, their conduct, faith, and purpose? My answer—and this is the incredible gift God has given me—is YES! I am presently learning and grasping. Who will write me that letter? My mentors: Ralph Mackintosh (my Dad), Pastor Rod Henry, Bryan McPherson, and Damian Robles.

These godly men have tons to teach me about godly living in Christ. I get to watch their lives closely in ministry together and in their own stories, and I get to follow in their footsteps. I get to hear God speak words of truth and wisdom into my life through them.

That’s a powerful thing, I’ll tell you.

You need an outside voice

Who is mentoring you? Do you, as Timothy did, “know those from whom you have learned?” Have you followed and studied their teaching, way of life, purpose, faith, love, patience? The ever-present danger is deciding that you have “arrived.” You are already successful in church leadership, church life, or feel you have learned all you can. That is crazy talk.

There are areas of sin in your life and you need help breaking out of that bondage or those patterns. There are areas of stupid in your life, and you simply need wise, godly counsel to point and say “Stop being stupid!”

Perhaps you are so caught up in the business and busy-ness of life that you need an outside voice to give some perspective. Likely you are doing some good things in life, but you don’t know how to discern or step from good to great. Remember, Timothy was already a great leader in the church, but Paul continued to mentor him towards excellence!

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Others can teach you...

Allow me to quote my own mentor, Pastor Rod: “Mentoring moves us from mediocrity to excellence because someone who knows us and loves us is speaking hard things into our lives.”

Proverbs 27:17 puts it this way: “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.”

Who is mentoring you? Whose life are you studying? 99% of the time, this is not going to just “happen” to you. The perfect mentor won’t stop by and say, “I will now mentor you.” It certainly didn’t go down that way for me. You are responsible to pursue and learn from godly people. God has placed those people in your life.

No matter where you are in life, there are others in the Body of Christ who have things to teach you. You may be incredibly gifted and mature in Christian ministry, for example, but you need to learn humility or patience or compassion.

...and even get personal

There is much more that could be said about mentoring. How do you actually follow a mentor? With ready feet, learning the disciplines and practices that shape their own lives and ministry. How do you listen to a mentor? By giving them permission to speak hard truth into your life, and then listening with HUGE ears.

Paul gave Timothy advice on every aspect of his ministry, but he even got into personal stuff. Timothy apparently had some bad gas...trointestinal issues, probably from the water in Ephesus, and Paul recommended a bit of wine. This was *pre*-Pepto-Bismol.

As Timothy did, you have to follow and study not only the explicit teaching of your mentor, but also

the way of life, faith, purpose, love, patience... all of these.

There is much more to mentoring, but it all starts with two things: You have to see the need, and you have to see the mentor.

You have to see the need

News flash: You have not yet arrived! You have not yet achieved Christian maturity, Christ-like perfection. None of us has. In this world, perfection is a direction we are moving, not a destination we achieve.

“

It all starts with two things: You have to see the need, and you have to see the mentor.

”

Here’s another News Flash: You aren’t going to get there alone. God doesn’t call us to walk alone.

Yes, we have the Bible. Yes, we have the Holy Spirit. But we also have the fellowship of the saints, the Body of Christ. Without inviting godly men and women to see and speak into your life, you will get stuck. You will get distracted. Worst of all, you might get *satisfied* with mediocrity. That is tragic.

You have to see the need. Then, knowing you need help to take a next step in Christian maturity—from mediocrity into excellence—you need to see the mentor.

You have to see the mentor

You may look around your church, your community, your family, and

see no potential mentors.

There was a time in my life when I “knew everything” and no one could teach me. I knew it all at about 14 years old. I can tell you the date I decided I had nothing more to learn in the church sermons, for example: June 3, 1995. I took notes on every sermon in this Bible since I got it when I was baptized until 6/3/95. That’s the date of my last notes on a sermon, and I remember deciding it wasn’t worth taking notes anymore because I knew it all.

Fortunately, God taught me better a few years later. I was humbled, and the most valuable lesson I have learned over the last 10 years is how little I know, and how much the people around me have to teach me. My official “mentors” are just the start. I even learned something from my little brother, Jono, once. Once.

Each of us needs wide-open, humble, discerning eyes to see how much the godly people in our lives have to teach us.

A mentor doesn’t have to be ahead of us or better than us in every aspect of life. A mentor is one who has wisdom or insight to offer in one or more aspects of life. A mentor is one who asks the question that makes you stop, and reflect, and reconsider. A mentor is one who will speak the word that you hated and so needed to hear.

Look around you with humble eyes. I pray, over the course of today, that you will come up with a name. The name of a Paul. The name of a mentor.

You see the need. See the mentor. Be a Timothy, pursue a Paul. **SR**

Dusty Mackintosh serves as Assistant Pastor at the Next Step SDB Church in Thornton, Colo.

Investing for Eternity

**Raising a leader builds a progression,
builds more churches, and
you learn along the way, too**

*by Pastor John Pethel
Metro Atlanta, Ga.*



*I was privileged to
have a few great
mentors come
along on my
journey.*

The Bible has so much to say about leadership: from Joseph's integrity shown in his success in Egypt, to Moses heeding the advice of his father-in-law to delegate, to David being fearless in following God's will before a giant, to the wisdom of Solomon, to the organization of Nehemiah, to the servant leadership of our Lord, to the frankness and direct approach of Paul.

In all these examples, we see that while God wants us to follow Him

first and foremost, He also provides leaders who help and equip us to get there.

Big goal, big fail

Raising, developing, and unleashing new leaders is one of the most difficult things to do in the church today. It is the topic of many books and conferences. Most seminaries require courses in leadership for their students.

Leadership is most certainly

a buzzword in tons of Christian blogs and magazines. Yet, through all of this talk and hoopla, how many churches are actually applying the biblical principle of reproducing leadership?

In looking at the examples of discipleship in the Bible, it seems that one of the most important things that Christians (or Christian leaders) can do is to multiply themselves. Most people in today's society strive to do this by attempting to have themselves in multiple places at the same time. This never works!

It makes much more sense to work with God on this. We need to encourage and equip those He has

cont. next page

gifted to help serve and lead His church right where we are.

During the last six years of my pastorate, the most important—and one of the most enjoyable—things that I have been able to do is to invest time in others whom God has called into leadership. This was borne from my personal experience.

I was privileged to have a few great mentors come along on my journey who invested knowledge, wisdom, time, money, and emotions in my development as a pastor and leader. To this day, those mentors are still investing in my development, as well as my peers, and the congregations I have served.

Why is this difficult?

The reality of today's church is that raising, developing, and unleashing new leaders is one of the most difficult things to make happen. There are a few reasons for that.

First, Satan does not want church leaders to proclaim the Kingdom of God. So he lies to them and convinces leaders that they can minister by and to themselves. He causes pride to become a stumbling block against raising a generation of selfless, Kingdom-centered leaders.

Second, low expectations have been placed upon church membership. The church has become so happy and satisfied with mere attendance that we have rarely required much else.

This leads to the third reason. Too high expectations have been placed on church leadership. Our biblical picture of church leadership from Acts 6 shows the apostles gathering other people to help so they didn't neglect their ministry of prayer and proclaiming the Word.

The modern picture of church leadership has us struggling to get members to serve each other and our communities. This not only hampers the ministry of prayer and proclaiming the Word, but also has our members expecting the church leadership to do everything. A “consumer culture” is created where churches feel the need to cater to the perceived needs of members and/or community (youth groups, children's ministry, worship shows, etc.) instead of their real need—Jesus.



“

Churches that have a shared leadership structure are poisoning themselves for the growth that God will bring them.

”

Who are the leaders of a church?

When looking at the passages of Scripture concerning church leadership, such as 1 Timothy 3, there is a clear indication of two offices of leadership in the New Testament church: pastor (or elder), and deacon.

Due to the importance of the local church as the agent of God's Kingdom in the present age, and Seventh Day Baptists' historical use of a covenant membership structure and congregational polity, I believe that a church member is also a level of leadership and responsibility in the local church.

Why more leaders?

Developing and discipling new and more leaders is of the utmost importance. The advancement of the Kingdom of God is at stake!

Leaders—*leaders*—should be raised, trained, taught, and guided to lead the mission of God, and not a *program* of the church. Programs, no matter how good they are, were not made to last forever. However, the Kingdom and reign of God through our Lord Jesus Christ will last for eternity.

As we train more leaders, they will acquire a culture of investing in and discipling others. The leaders that your church develops will develop more leaders. That is how movements are born.

If creating more local churches in more cities and countries is a priority for Seventh Day Baptists, then there is a need for more leaders. As we desire to advance the Kingdom of God with Gospel-centered SDB “embassies” planted all around North America and the globe, the equation is simple: More churches = More leaders.

One of the greatest things that happens to a leader who invests in the lives of others is that God teaches them through those they are mentoring.

A shared leadership

In the operation of the local church, one person was never meant to shoulder the burden of leadership. With varied gifts and different experiences, the leadership of the local church should be placed in the hands of biblically qualified people who will shepherd, guide, and administrate it toward the mission of God. Churches that have a shared leadership structure are poising themselves for the growth that God will bring them.

And perhaps the best reason for developing more leaders: Jesus did it. It was His example to invest in the leaders of His church. He chose them. He dedicated His teaching and ministry to His disciples, primarily.

Jesus did this because He knew He would have to leave someone to carry on and lead the mission to which He was entrusted. His concerted effort was found in developing a small group of men to develop more leaders.

Where are the leaders?

The leaders that need your investment are probably worshipping next to you every week. It is possible that they haven't even started attending your church yet. They might be in the youth group,

or at college, or in the senior citizen center.

Leaders for the local church should not be developed merely based on the length of their membership or their expertise in the marketplace. Our time and investment should be spent on those who have a passionate love for Jesus Christ and for His bride, the Church. Prayerfully consider the potential that God has given them and their spiritual trajectory.

Qualities for potential leaders can be demonstrated in competency, character, caring, and responsibility. Potential leaders can be taught many things but they cannot be taught the fruits of salvation as manifested through their integrity, character, and love for others.

Ask these questions

Here are some questions that you should ask yourself when looking to invest in potential leaders:

- Is this person qualified biblically (above reproach, repentant, participatory, etc.)?
- Is this person teachable? Do they have a learning spirit? Do they strive to glorify Jesus in everything?
- Can they be entrusted to be faithful in little tasks? Do

they ask for help/guidance when needed?

- Do they willingly serve others? Are they looking for ways to show the love of God to others?

How do we develop leaders?

Leadership is lifelong learning—for both parties. One of the greatest things that happens to a leader who invests in the lives of others is that God teaches them through those they are mentoring.

The best way to develop leaders is to let them see what church leadership looks like through your perspective. Share your experiences with them. Let them participate in what you are doing.

Let them see how you handle the great successes that God brings to your church. Let them see how you handle mistakes when you make them.

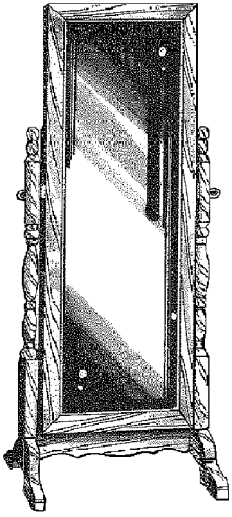
Give those who will be leaders the opportunity to lead and learn and make mistakes while you are there. Let them do something. Let them fail. Let them try again.

Allow your leaders to learn from others besides yourself. There are so many things for us to learn from others. Pick people whom God has gifted and you admire, and spend the time to see how God made them into who they are.

And finally, brothers...

Encourage your leaders not just with praise but also with “constructive” feedback. Provide them with ways to evaluate and see the evidences of God's grace in their life.

Your investment in raising more leaders will be an investment in eternity! **SR**



Reflections

"Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face."—1 Cor. 13:12

March comes but once a year—thankfully

Most of my friends know I hate March. For me, living through that month in Wisconsin is akin to eating pizza every morning for 31 days—pizza topped with moldy cheese and raw squid sprinkled with lint. Every year, I long for April like Romeo longed for Juliet.

The NIV Bible mentions snow 23 times; 21 times in the Old Testament and two in the New. It also mentions frost, rain, hail, and ice.

"[God] spreads the snow like wool and scatters the frost like ashes" (Psalm 147:16).

"Have you entered the storehouses of the snow or seen the storehouses of the hail?" (Job 38:22).

"Does the rain have a father? ... From whose womb comes the ice? Who gives birth to the frost from the heavens when the waters become hard as stone, when the surface of the deep is frozen?" (Job 38:28-30).

March—with its maddening mix of rain and fog, and gloomy days decorated with dirty snow and ice—chills my soul as well as my body.

By the time March arrives, Thanksgiving and Christmas are distant memories.

No more warm family gatherings around tables brimming with food and friendly conversation. No more homes filled with the delightful fragrance of pine needles, cinnamon-scented candles, and

freshly-baked Christmas cookies.

The spirit-lifting words and melodies of "Silent Night" and "Joy to the World" no longer waft from church steeples. The twinkling, colorful lights that once turned neighborhoods into miniature glowing villages, are dark once again.

March squats on my front steps like a lonely, shaggy dog. It wants to enter my house, but I fight the urge to let it in.

Near the end of March, I sit by the fireplace sipping hot chocolate, curled up on our couch like a contented cat. Tiny spheres of sleet tap on our windows. It's like Old Man Winter, waning fast, is drumming his thin, icy fingers on the panes, trying to get my attention. "I'm still here," he taunts.

I ignore his desperate attempts to get me to notice him one last time. Instead, I'm already thinking of April and the joy it holds.

Occasionally, the old sun peeks through March's drab curtain. It flashes and teases, then ducks behind a mountain of gray clouds. But I know it's a trick. The March sun is a decoy, trying to lull me into the false belief that it's a joyous month, but I know better.

Why does March linger so long, especially when it's unwanted and unloved? Can jealousy be a factor?

January is dressed in colorful streamers and sprinkled with confetti; a party animal decked out in a variety of hats.

February is a month of hearts and



love, with cupids shooting arrows at unsuspecting lovers.

And April?

April is a doorway, leading from the fading days of winter into the promises of spring. With its gentle rains and sprouting daffodils, April welcomes the world with hugs and smiles. It's the month of puddles, bubbling brooks, and warming soil. It might enter the world as the Month of Fools, but it's also the month of Budding Life.

I find myself paraphrasing 1 Corinthians 15:55, "Where, O March, is your victory? Where, O March, is your sting?"

Although I hate the third month of the year, it does have one positive attribute: the wretchedness of March makes me appreciate the other 11 months even more.

We often need the "downs" of life to help us value the "ups" of life. By suffering through the "bad," we are all the more thankful for the "good." So, strangely, a small part of me is actually thankful for March.

I'm also thankful March lasts only 31 days, and that it comes only once a year. **SR**



Women's Society page by Katrina Goodrich
www.sdbwomen.org

Will you neglect or respond?

Not long ago, I was working with a child who—for whatever reason—had chosen to be quite obstinate. I know she wanted to perform an activity but it could only be done with my help. Every time I tried to assist her she balked and refused to cooperate. It seemed silly for her to resist.

Realizing that I could not force her to let me help, I resigned to asking her every few minutes if she was ready to accept my support and reminded her that we only had so much time to get it done. After that, she would be out of luck.

I also reminded her that actions had consequences, and she probably wouldn't be too fond of the ones that would result from her refusal to work with me. Despite all of this she still refused to cooperate.

Time was up, so I moved on. She did not. She began to pitch quite a fit, stunning everyone in the vicinity. Even though I had warned her and explained what the outcome of her actions would be, she did not believe what I had told her. I laid out everything to her and she heard me, but she still would not comply.

This seemed like so much foolishness to me. She had what she wanted within her grasp; all she needed to do was allow me to help and follow the rules. Yet, as ridiculous as her actions appeared to me, I find myself making the same basic mistake with even greater consequences.

In Revelation 3:20 Jesus tells

us that he is standing at the door knocking. If we hear and respond, letting him in, he will abide with us and we with him. According to this verse there are two things we need to do: hear and answer.

Hearing him may be difficult. At any given time it seems like there are a *million* things to do. Chores, work, family responsibilities, and all of them seem to scream louder than Jesus does. However, I can't use this as an excuse. If I would just stop, look, quiet myself, and listen it wouldn't be a problem to hear him. But I don't want to.

Sometimes the most difficult thing is to respond. Willfully neglecting to listen is the same as listening and then walking away. For whatever reason—just like the

little girl I was trying to help—I refuse to listen to Jesus and act favorably on his instructions, knowing that the consequences could be disastrous. Silly, right?

Jesus is not going to force us to do what he wants. He allows us to choose our response to him and he even gives us all the facts in his Word. It's like he says, *If you want eternal life, let me change you and abide with you, follow me; hear the knock, answer the door. Choose to leave it and you will die.*

Really it seems like such a simple choice; common sense. "Of course, I don't want to die." But how many times do we ignore him and let him continue to knock indefinitely, waiting for us while we go and do what we want? How many times are we so busy and rushed that we throw open the door and run him over, completely missing the fact that he was even there? How many times do we willfully neglect him, and do the opposite of what he wants?

The first rule of getting better is to acknowledge you have a problem. I have a problem. Next step: STOP IGNORING God. Get up and make an effort to listen to what He says.

There's an easy way to find out what He's saying. It's in the Bible. Reading the Bible and praying every day—for even 20 minutes—is a great way to listen. After all, God wrote what He wants you to know in there. Take a verse or a chapter a day, read it and pray about the words you read. What a great way to listen!

All that's left is putting it to practice. It's not necessarily the easy part but if your attitude is listening to God your actions will follow. **SR**





Who's in charge? *Explicit and Implicit Polity*

The junction of beliefs and how we live them out is the defining factor in our lives as Christians. The most common charge leveled at Christians today is centered on asymmetry between professed beliefs and embodied beliefs.

The media, with its brutal efficiency in exposing scandals, readily and frequently attest to the disjunction between Christian ideals and the activities of those who follow Christ. It has never been more important that Christians in general, and Seventh Day Baptists in particular, strive to match our behavior to our convictions.

One of the most obvious areas where our beliefs affect our practice is in our polity. Polity is simply a description of how we operate our local congregations.

In the broadest sense of the word, there are three types of polity: rule by one person (like the Catholic pope), rule by a group of people (as in Presbyterian congregations), or rule by the congregation (the SDB position). By “rule,” we do not and cannot mean that any of these people actually “rule” over the church—only Jesus can do that! The word “rule” in this context refers to where the responsibility falls to determine God’s will as it relates to the life of the congregation.

The SDB Statement of Belief about “the church” conveys our shared convictions about this:

We believe that the church of God is all believers gathered by the Holy Spirit and joined into one body, of which Christ is the Head. We believe that the local church is a community of believers organized in covenant relationship...

We believe in the priesthood of all believers and practice the autonomy of the local congregation, as we seek to work in association with others for more effective witness.

Does our behavior match these lofty statements?

As it does so often, our history tells the story, and the story in this case is decidedly mixed.

Our history, unfortunately, highlights some instances where petty human squabbles clearly preempted the congregation’s responsibility to be the body of Christ. Without going into the gory details, there seem to be stories where an individual or individuals usurped

“Petty human squabbles clearly preempted the congregation’s responsibility to be the body of Christ.”

Christ’s role as head of the church. Though the examples vary in time and place, the results are always the same: division,

factions, rancor, and a lot of wounded people.

In some cases, parties used a favorable vote at a business meeting to justify their behavior as a proper decision of the whole body. The facts make it clear, however, that the decisions reached were nothing of the kind.

An individual or individuals, through various means, forced the church into a decision that reflected their own will—or, if we want to be charitable, their exclusive interpretation of God’s will. In other words, there was a difference between the *explicit* polity of the church (how they claimed to operate) and the *implicit* polity of the church (what they actually did in practice).

While claiming to be congregational, the congregations in these cases were operating as though they had a ruler other than Jesus. Thankfully, God can and does redeem such situations, but that is not an excuse for us to settle for less than Christ’s exclusive rule.

The stakes couldn’t be higher. It is much more than a question of semantics. We proclaim that our congregations are assemblies that Christ directs and guides for the sake of His kingdom. Covenants, the core of our congregational life, are built on the premise that we all serve the same King—the One and Only.

If our lived reality does not reflect that truth, we give false testimony about who Christ is and His mission on earth. It is apostasy for our congregations to serve our wills rather our King’s. Therefore, the question remains: Who really runs your church? **SR**



Retired Pastor Profile

Retired Pastor Profile



Name: David C. Pearson

Birthdate, place: Sept. 10, 1931 Amsterdam, NY

“Though I received Christ at an early age and was baptized at about 12, I didn’t join a church until years later when I united with the Paint Rock SDB Church in Alabama.

“I grew up in a Christian, Sabbath-keeping home. My uncle pastored a first-day church, so we attended there and also at the Schenectady (NY) Mission, an outreach of the Berlin SDB Church. Attending church on Sabbath and Sunday we practically kept both days, and I was taught to respect the day observed by others. It was not uncommon to attend seven or more services within a given week.”

Family:

Married: Bettie Butler on Sept. 20, 1953

Children: Deborah and Joanna

Grandchildren: 10

Education:

1949 Wilbur H. Lynch High School, Amsterdam, NY

1953 BA in Religion, Bob Jones University, Greenville, SC

1959 Gordon Divinity School, South Hamilton, Mass.— some classes

1972 MA in Religion, Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, PA

Ministry Experience:

SDB Churches

Paint Rock, AL (1953)

Berea and Middle Island, WV (1953-54)

Richburg, NY (1965-66)

Marlboro, NJ (1966, student supply)

Plainfield, NJ (1977-79)

Paint Rock, AL (1979)

Memphis, TN (1989-95)

SDB Boards and Agencies

SDB Missionary in Malawi, Africa (1954-65, 1967-76, 1979-88)

Other

Teacher, Makapwa Bible College, Malawi (1997, 2000-01)

Chapel services, Floyd Medical Center (2003-present)

Non-Ministry Experience:

Maintenance, National Cotton Council (1989-96)

Court-Appointed Special Advocate (1999-2005)

Favorite Author:

Saint John the Gospel writer

Retirement Location:

Aragon, GA

Retirement Activities:

Local senior’s group, morning walks to keep in shape, clerk for the Metro Atlanta SDB Church, working with tools in home shop, keeping in touch with friends in Malawi. Bettie also wrote a book, *A Hundredfold: Memories of Missionary Life in Africa* (available from the author). **SR**



The pressure's on

As my daughter and I were talking the other day, I used the phrase “atmospheric pressure” in passing. As soon as the words had crossed my lips, I knew the question might come. But she just nodded her head and let the conversation continue.

When the discussion broke up and we were getting up to do something else, she decided that the time had come to ask: “Daddy, what’s atmospheric pressure?”

I took my first shot. “Atmospheric pressure is a way to measure how much air is stacked on top of any given place.” Her look said it all. I hadn’t communicated. She did not understand.

So, I looked around and thought, *Where should I begin? What can she understand?* While I was tempted to bail on the conversation by distracting her with a book or a game, the stuffed animals in the corner of her room caught my eye.

“Let’s imagine for a minute. If I took just one of your stuffed animals and put it on top of you, would you notice?” She explained that it would depend on whether it was the big bear or the smaller animals. So we settled for a smaller animal.

“Now, what happens if instead of adding just one, we stack *all* of them on top of you? Would that get heavier?” Yes.

“We could count the number of stuffed animals piled on top of you and use that number to talk about how heavy the stuffed animals seemed to be.”

“Atmospheric pressure is kind of like that. We pick a number to talk about how much air is stacked above us. You see, air is made up of a lot of little pieces that are so small we can’t see them, but they are all around us. Sometimes there are more pieces, sometimes there are fewer pieces. When we say ‘atmospheric pressure,’ we’re talking about how many of those pieces are stacked above us.”

With that, she was ready to move on with the day.

And with that, I thought again about those moments when we need to communicate something we know and don’t have a clue how or where to start. I won’t claim that reaching for stuffed animals was what I should have done, but in the absence of a better plan, I grabbed



what was handy. Unless you are a meteorologist, when it comes to explaining things like atmospheric pressure, there is little reason to prepare: the topic doesn’t come up often.

But when it comes to the Gospel, in most circumstances we should know how and where to start. Scripture makes it clear that Christians are expected to know how to tell others about the hope He has given us (1 Peter 3:15). One of the best ways to become ready is to practice identifying the Gospel in your own life and reminding Christians of God’s gracious hand.

Another way to become ready is to learn from people who already know how and where to start. There are many good books, videos, and tracts from which you can learn. One of the Gospel presentations that I have found very helpful is called “Two Ways To Live: The Choice We All Face.” It was produced by two Australians for their ministry in a hostile culture. You can find the presentation online at <http://twowaystolive.com>. I share the presentation’s teaser to start your thinking:

“The message at the heart of Christianity is really quite simple—simple enough to be outlined in a few pages. It is a message from the Bible about God and His Son Jesus. It is about life and death, and the choice that we all face.

“And it all starts with a loving creator God...” **SR**



the BEACON

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

March 2013

Rise (above) and shine!

by Elianna Chroniger
Alfred Station, N.Y.

A good friend of mine was diagnosed with brain cancer on November 22, 2010. After that initial shock and following battle, he was thought to be in remission.

Since then my favorite Bible verse stuck itself deep into my everyday thought. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13). Every time I glanced at a crying classmate I could hear the verse run through my head. Every time I looked at my friend's empty seat in class, the words from God stood out.

When I was recently called into my guidance counselor's office I recited those familiar words in my mind. I walked in and braced myself for what I was about to hear. Nothing could have prepared me for the overwhelming words: "There's a second tumor" and "There isn't anything they can do."

My heart leapt up to my throat and my breathing caught. I tried to decipher what was being said. My mind was spinning in so many different directions.

Honestly, at that moment when God should have been number one on my mind, He was nowhere close. It was a moment of weakness where I know God could have helped me. I cried.

As soon as I realized I had left God out of my sadness I stopped



what I was doing and prayed. I asked Him to help me. I prayed that I could take my favorite verse seriously and live by it.

Since that moment, every time I hear that verse run through my head, I stop what I'm doing and evaluate how I'm living. I look at where I am when I hear the words, "I can do ALL things" and I realize that all means all. Anything that I'm having a problem with, I *can* overcome with the help of Christ. It may not be overcome in the timeframe that I have in mind, but it will be overcome eventually.

God places people and sayings and things in your path to help you overcome your struggles. There are friends who say the right things or do

the right things when you need them, a family that can act just plain silly, and even random people who greet you with a wide, bright-eyed smile or a chipper "hello." All these things may be seen as coincidences, or as things just falling into place. If you think that, then maybe it's time that you reexamine your viewpoint.

Maybe try looking at it from the perspective of an inexperienced young teenager. Look at these things as being signs from God!

Check out your Bible and find a verse that sums up the encouraging words you want to hear in a sad situation. Memorize that verse. Use it when you're overwhelmed. Remember it when you're thrilled with life. Look to God when you're happy, sad, angry, confused, and any other emotion you feel.

If my viewpoint is too different or too simple, spice it up a little. I challenge you to think of one thing you can do to change your outlook on life. Implement it. Make it yours, and then pass on this challenge to others!

I used my verse to change how I live and how I view tragedy. Satan can try to win you over, but if you use the Word of the Lord he won't succeed. Be the person who wakes up in the morning, plants your feet on the floor, and makes the Devil shudder with fear. Make yourself shine for Christ every day!! **SR**

The Gospel says **WHAT??**

by Katie Brown
Westerly, R.I.

I am learning more and more that most people don't seem to fully understand the *Surrender* that the Gospel requires, nor do they understand the *Freedom* that the Gospel gives.

Some of these mistaken people are extremely religious and morally upright. They may be the nicest, most successful and "perfect" people you know. But they are **exhausted**.

Others, unfortunately, have just given up. They "tried Jesus" but it didn't work: "I said the prayer! I went to church! I tried and I tried and I tried and nothing changed!"

Both camps never fully surrendered "self," and both camps haven't found the joy in knowing YOU CAN'T EARN GOD'S LOVE.

Most of you, if you've been to church, know that Jesus died for you when you were still a sinner and by grace you were saved (Ephesians 2:5). But the text goes on to say:

And this is not your own doing; it is a gift of God, not the result of works, so no one may boast. (Ephesians 2:9 ESV)

You had no part in your salvation, and yet we easily forget that and think His gift is not enough! We think that we must "do something" to stay in right standing with God. And the church / fellow believers can drive that thinking sometimes.

Whether we want to or not, we start focusing on, "To be a good Christian you follow the commandments... To be a good Christian you read the Bible x amount of times a day... To be a good Christian you pray like this..."

For we hold [or believe] that one is justified by faith apart from the law. (Romans 3:28)

No, to BE a good Christian you are saved by Jesus Christ, by faith, and you follow Him. If you start focus-

ing on yourself and how to "work" to get closer to God then you can start to slip and get frustrated with yourself and doubt God.

Paul writes to the churches in Galatia, "For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit to the yoke of slavery." (Galatians 5:1)

What yoke was Paul talking about? He goes onto explain:

"You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace. For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness." (Galatians 5:4-5)

These believers were trying to justify themselves by the law (in this case, circumcision). It's as if we think we have to do more to *really* be forgiven. "There's no way Jesus PAID IT ALL IN FULL."

But listen, we know we have become the "righteousness of God" (2 Cor. 5:21) and Jesus is going to present us "Blameless" to the Father, and this gives Jesus "great joy!" (Jude 1:24)

Have you not "transformed" in your Christian walk because you have been trying to work your way through a relationship with Him? Is your Christian walk a "to do list" that you are honestly tired of filling out? Are you wondering where is *my* joy?

If any of this has struck a chord and the Holy Spirit is entreating you to seek more, please do! Talk to a pastor, trusted believer, and ultimately confess to God that you have been trying to "Earn your way."

Jesus is calling to you:

"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28) SR

From Katie Brown's blog "Earth's Crammed with Heaven." <http://everycommonbushafire.wordpress.com>



Colorado Springs, CO

July 28–Aug. 3, 2013



The President's Page

by Ralph Mackintosh

Shaking things up (a little)

Have you ever been “stuck in a rut”? That doesn’t literally happen too often these days since we no longer drive horse-pulled wagons on dirt roads.

Years of travel in all kinds of weather formed grooves or ruts in the road. When the vehicle’s wheels became trapped in these depressions it was difficult to veer from the established path. Today, of course, the idiom has come to mean repeatedly doing things the same way with little variation.

As I was thinking about this year’s General Conference meetings I had to ask if I was willing to shake things up and take a risk or two that might violate some “sacred cows.” (How did a Hindu reference make it into a *Sabbath Recorder* article?) I might hear that I didn’t make the right musical choices, the band was too loud (or too soft), or the speakers were too long, too short, too charismatic or too traditional. Such is the life of the Conference President; and next year we’ll get a different approach with a different President.

In planning our week in Colorado Springs I’ve been drawing on years of participating in medical and technical conferences, church-related conferences and corporate events. As some of you know, my second career after medical physics has been performing at these types of

functions. My experiences at these large scale events have given me a different perspective on what brings people to a conference and what makes for a meaningful week.

We gather as a big SDB family to renew acquaintances, fellowship and worship together, and enjoy each other’s company. But I would like this year’s Conference to be much more than a family reunion.

I’ve been asking myself: Are our Conference programs dynamic enough to attract non-SDBs? Do new attendees feel welcome and involved? Are the programs and learning activities of such high quality that they make me want to commit my vacation time to travelling across the country? At the end of the week will I think I received value for my time and expense? Was my life significantly enriched by my attendance at Conference 2013?

My concept of a good Conference experience is based on three pillars: Inspiration, Knowledge, and Fun. We should leave the week inspired by the music we heard, the messages that were delivered and the experiences we shared. Corporate worship should lift us up, renew our spirits and motivate us to action.

Secondly, everyone should return home with new knowledge, new skills, new insights or new understanding that can be applied


to their daily lives and to their personal and church ministries. And finally the week should be one of fun and enjoyment in fellowship with brothers and sisters in Christ.

At the end of Conference I want you to have positive answers to these questions: Did I encounter or experience God at a higher altitude or in a new way? Did I learn something I didn’t know before that will affect my life or ministry?

Did I make a new friend? Was Conference good enough that it was worth giving up a week of my vacation time instead of going to Disney World or Hawaii? (Okay, maybe we can’t compete with the Mouse or Hawaiian beaches but did we come close?)

So one of my challenges for the year is to find outstanding speakers and teachers that will motivate and educate, inspire and challenge, and expand our perspectives. We are planning some activities that are different from anything seen at Conference before and some new events that are just plain fun.

I hope to start announcing the speakers that will be bringing the keynote addresses. (Hint: One speaker will be an author of a book many SDBs have been reading this year).

Hopefully you’re planning to be a part of Conference in Colorado and you will join us as we strive to move **Forward in HIS Footsteps.** 



by Executive Director
Rob Appel

Be Faithful to the Ministry You Receive

The Apostle Paul remembered that the greatest calling he had ever received was the calling to serve Christ Jesus! Just as Paul's focus on his calling kept him on the right track, so should our definitive calling keep us focused on the correct path.

If you are focused on something that is not of Christ's calling, the Holy Spirit will make it clear that you need to get back to, and be faithful to, the ministry that you originally received! Paul's mission was to please Jesus Christ. Paul's attitude was to be led by the Holy Spirit—all the time and at any cost!

For the past ten years or so we have been hearing, "What's your mission in life? What's your purpose?" I want to ask you another question, and I'd like you to stop long enough to answer it: **WHAT IS THE MINISTRY THAT YOU RECEIVED?**

We all receive a ministry of some type. You might not have stopped long enough to realize what, who, and where you serve. But you do have a ministry! Are you faithful to it?

This is what Oswald Chambers was getting at in his March 5 devotional from the book *My Utmost For His Highest*. Chambers wrote, "Joy comes from seeing the complete fulfillment of the specific purpose for which I was created and born again, not from successfully doing something of my own choosing. The joy our Lord experienced came from doing what the Father sent Him to do. Have you received a ministry from the Lord? If so, you must be faithful to it—to consider your life valuable only for the purpose of fulfilling that ministry. Knowing that you have done what Jesus sent you to do, think how satisfying it will be to hear Him say to you, 'Well done, good and faithful servant' (Matthew 25:21)."

Chambers goes on to say that we each have to find a niche in life, and we find it spiritually when we receive a ministry from the Lord. To find your spiritual niche, you must have a close relationship and fellowship with Jesus.

As you seek God's ministry for you, your priorities will change.

This means you must know Jesus as more than your personal Savior.

When Jesus said "Do you love Me? Then, feed My sheep," He was not offering us a choice of *if* we serve Him, or *how* we can serve Him. He was asking for total loyalty to His mission.

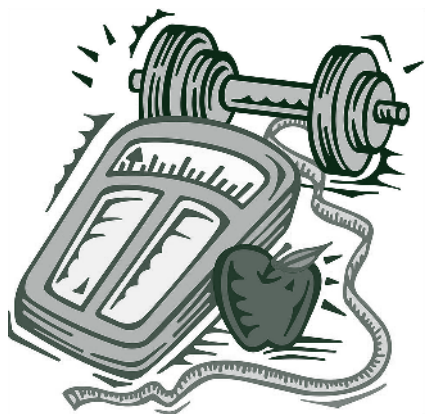
As you seek God's ministry for you, your priorities will change! His mission will become our mission. There are always going to be distractions, and some of these distractions will come from Christians. You can count on it! However, here are five tips to help keep you following God's plan:

- 1. Become confidently established in Jesus!
- 2. Become focused only on Him, and His ministry for you!
- 3. Build your foundation firmly on Him and become unwavering!
- 4. Be ready to speak God's word and He will encourage you and strengthen your faith!
- 5. Spend time in prayer—especially praying for the following of the Holy Spirit!

God has a special calling on every person, but we must become aware of His presence first! And then **He Really is Your Lord**, and you can be faithful to the ministry you have received and been called to! **SR**

Next Month:

A Surprise Visit from the Lord!



Aging, dementia and the faith community

by Barb Green, Parish Nurse
Milton, Wis.

For some of us, the journey of aging will include dementia, the progressive loss of cognitive function—our thinking, reasoning, and remembering. Dementia is feared because it threatens our identity and our role as productive, contributing members of the community. Becoming a “burden” on others marks us as a failure at the task of successful aging.

Christians have a different story to tell about what gives our lives worth and meaning. Personhood is not defined by our bodies or our cognitive abilities, but rather by our relationships with others and God.

Some question whether those with dementia can continue to live their faith if they are no longer able to remember God. They can, because faith is not dependent upon our individual memories or cognitive abilities.

If we should forget God, God will not forget us. Our faith community can remember us to God and bring His presence into our lives through means that do not require us to grasp that presence cognitively.

Dementia is just like any other disability that we often accommodate in the church. People with dementia should be encouraged to attend corporate worship. The familiar rituals, hymns and Bible readings speak on a deep level that doesn’t require grasping ideas or concepts. It provides people with the experience of being part of the gathered com-

munity of friends whose lives are intertwined with theirs—friends who call them by name and greet them with a smile or embrace.

There is no reason to not include people with dementia in service projects. Many can still read and may enjoy leading in the worship service, a singer may still be able to provide special music, a deacon to serve communion.

When we regard our elders as being beyond the obligation to serve others, we deprive them of their identity as Christ’s disciples. We may assume that they can only be “shut-ins” or the recipients of care from others rather than persons actively engaged in Christian service. Dementia does not reduce our capacity to love, or our need to give that love expression in caring for others.

Congregational practices that provide a supportive environment for members journeying into memory loss are the same practices that make the life of the faith community rich for all who participate. These include:

- **Attentive listening**— Allowing the person to take his time in finding the word he wants to use rather than supplying it.
- **Patience and kindness**— When asked the same question repeatedly, answer again calmly.
- **Focusing on ability rather than limitation**
- **Providing practical support**— Transportation, assistance with keeping a home clean, or respite care for the caregiver.


•Maintaining an environment free from stigma and anxiety—

The shared life of the church should be a setting where those with dementia should always know that they are among people who know them and love them.

•Involving the entire community—

Including children and youth. The young do not need to be “protected” from the reality of dementia. In many ways they are more open to appreciating and enjoying the presence of these elders than others are.

Pastoral leadership can have a lot to do with how a congregation supports those with dementia. If pastors regard persons with dementia as not worthy of their time and attention, the congregation is not likely to think or act differently.

Ours is an aging society. As the number of older adults in our congregations increases, the church will be called to new practices and new ministries, particularly with those persons living with dementia. Instead of insisting that dementia is a kind of “living death,” we should counter with the good news our Lord proclaimed to persons of all ages and in all of life’s circumstances: “I am come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly!” 

(Adapted from “Aging, Dementia, and the Faith Community” by John T. McFadden, M.Div. John serves as Chaplain at the Appleton, Wis., Health Care Center)

CONFERENCE in COLORFUL COLORADO



Hello fellow SDBs and friends,

We are *SO* excited to officially invite you to join us for the 2013 General Conference sessions in Colorful Colorado on July 28 – August 3. Colorado is an amazing place to enjoy God’s beautiful creation via a myriad of family-friendly vacation opportunities before and after Conference.

The Conference location in Colo-

rado Springs offers scenic views of Pikes Peak and the Rocky Mountains, perfect low-humidity weather, close proximity to many appealing day-trip options, and access to the modern facilities at our host institution—the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs.

President Ralph Mackintosh has been hard at work putting together an unforgettable program to go along with his theme, “Forward in His Footsteps.” Our Host Committee, featuring the three Colorado churches—Boulder, Next Step (in Thornton) and Springs Life (Colorado Springs)—as well as other individuals from around the country, has been unleashed to make sure your Conference experience goes as smoothly as possible. And we know that many have been preparing their hearts by *Experiencing God*. So we are thrilled to anticipate the powerful impact that God will have on Seventh Day Baptists through our Conference.

We would love for you to be a part of it. More details will show up here in the *Recorder*, so check back each month. A Facebook page (facebook.com/SdbGeneralConference2013InColoradoSprings) will feature helpful information and links to prepare for your visit.

For specific questions, contact me at pastorsteve@sdbboulder.org or 303-541-9097. As our Conference Executive Director, Rob Appel, mentioned in a recent 7DB Blog post, we are encouraging everyone to stay on campus, if possible. The suite-style rooms are comfortable, up to date, and all in close proximity to each other and the dining hall. Please consider this as you make your plans.

I believe it was at Conference back in 2009 that Rob first mentioned to me his dream of having us host Conference in Colorado again. It has been a long journey, but we are thrilled that God has been in control and helped us to work out all the details to make this dream a reality. Won’t you please pray about being a part of the exciting things that God is going to do in, among, and through us at Conference this summer?

Privileged to serve you,
Pastor Steve Osborn, on behalf of an amazing Host Committee team
2013hostcommittee@seventhdaybaptist.org

Missions Coordinator Hired for the SDB Missionary Society

Brother Garfield Miller of Saint Andrew, Jamaica has accepted the position of Missions Coordinator. He will be relocating with his family to minister at the Missionary Society headquarters in Ashaway, RI.

Please continue to pray for God’s grace and provision as they answer this call to serve to God’s glory. 



The General Council is a group of 5 people elected by the SDB General Conference to act on their behalf for denominational matters between sessions of General Conference. According to the SDB Bylaws, "the General Council shall provide creative leadership and initiative for Seventh Day Baptists." Your feedback to the following questions will help us know what we are, can, and should be doing to support you and your local SDB church.

Send your response BY **MARCH 15, 2013** to sdbgc@seventhdaybaptist.org -or- mail paper responses to Susan Fox, 1722 Taylor Station Road, Blacklick OH 43004. Thanks for taking the time to let us know what you think! (If you are a Pastor, please share with your church members as well.)



*General Council Members:
Dannette Montague, Susan Fox,
Dale Thorngate, Rod Noel,
and John Pethtel (chair)*

Save time and a stamp! Go to www.surveymonkey.com/s/WKZ29XR

▶ Please rank each of the following to indicate which you think are most important for the five elected members of General Council to focus their attention. (1 = most important, to 5 = least important)

- | | |
|--|---|
| _____ Long term strategy | _____ Review & Accountability of SDB employees |
| _____ Fund raising | _____ Prioritize Board/Agency time and spending |
| _____ Visit churches & Association meetings | _____ Start new projects |
| _____ Promote evangelistic outreach activity | _____ Facilitate Communication |
| _____ Support & encourage Pastors | _____ Develop tracts, periodicals, teaching materials |
| _____ Other (describe): _____ | |
| _____ Other (describe): _____ | |

▶ How often do you attend SDB General Conference Sessions? Why or why not? What changes would increase your ability to attend SDB General Conference Sessions more often? _____

▶ Is there any additional (new or improved) service or assistance that the SDB denomination could provide to you or your church? _____

▶ What would you like the new members of General Council to know about you or your church? _____

▶ Are you interested in receiving SDB communication and other materials through the internet? _____

New members

Berlin, NY

Matthew Olson, pastor

Joined after baptism

Bryan DiMicco

Lauren Michaels

Little Rock, AR

Jeffrey Monroe, pastor

Joined after testimony

Geoffrey and Naomi Shubert

Metro Atlanta, GA

John Pethtel, pastor

Joined after testimony

Ron Davis, MD

Christine Davis

Joined by letter

Steven and Emily Graffius

Middle Island, WV

D. Scott Smith, pastor

Joined by letter

Kenneth E. Smith

Paint Rock, AL

Joined after testimony

Ronald McCarver

Doug and Patricia Potter

Shiloh, NJ

Don Chroniger, pastor

Joined after baptism

Hollyn Probasco

Deanna Richey

Joined by letter

W. Allen Sloan

The SDB Historical Society's 2013

Annual Meeting

will be held at the

SDB Center

3120 Kennedy Road,

Janesville, WI,

on May 26, 2013

at 2:00 p.m.

*All interested Seventh
Day Baptists are
invited to attend.*

Obituaries

Bonham.—Rachel (Dickinson)

Bonham, 96, of Hopewell Township, N.J., died April 8, 2012.

The widow of Chester A. Bonham, who died in 2004, she was born in Shiloh, N.J., and was a lifetime area resident.

Mrs. Bonham was the daughter of Charles and Edna (Hoffman) Dickinson. She was a graduate of Bridgeton High School and became a registered nurse following her graduation from the Jefferson Hospital School of Nursing in Philadelphia.

For many years, she helped her husband with the operation of their vegetable and egg farm. She was a member of the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Shiloh and was devoted to her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Survivors include two sons, James C. Bonham of Hopewell Twp. and Clifton D. Bonham of Mt. Joy, Pa.; four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren; one sister, Anna Mary Richardson of Shiloh; and

several nieces and nephews. In addition to her husband, Rachel was predeceased by a sister, Gertrude Davis, and two brothers, Everett and Oliver Dickinson. At Mrs. Bonham's request, private services took place at the convenience of the family.

Richardson.—Anna Mary (Dickinson) Richardson, 87, of Shiloh, N.J., died June 10, 2012.

The daughter of Charles and Edna (Hoffman) Dickinson, she was born in Bridgeton on June 6, 1925 and was the widow of William H. Richardson, Jr. who died in 2002. She was a lifetime resident of Shiloh.

For many years she assisted her husband in the operation of Richardson's General Store in Shiloh. Ann and Bill were married for 57 years. She was a member of the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Shiloh, the Shiloh Grange #16 and also the State and National Grange organizations.

Surviving are two daughters, Clara R. Mulford of Stow Creek

Township, N.J., and Miriam A. Richardson of Shiloh; two grandsons, Shawn W. Mulford and Kyle J. Mulford; two great-grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her son, Robert W. Richardson; two sisters, Rachel Bonham and Gertrude Davis; and two brothers, Oliver Dickinson and Everett Dickinson. Memorial services were held at the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Shiloh on June 16, 2012. Burial was at the church cemetery.

Corona.—F. Mildred (Davis)

Corona, 89, of Upper Deerfield Township, N.J., died on August 27, 2012.

She was born and raised in South Jersey. She was a long time member of the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Shiloh. Funeral services were held on August 30 at the Freitag Funeral Home with Pastor Don Chroniger officiating. Burial was at Fernwood Memorial Park in Hopewell Township. **SR**

Births

Mattus.—A son, David Joel, was born to Dave and Courtney (Uhland) Mattus of Bridgeton, NJ on April 18, 2012.

Medina.—A son, Landon Gregory, was born to Juan Carlos and Jennifer (Boyajian) Medina of Boca Raton, FL on June 6, 2012.

Gant.—A son, Isaiah Ross, was born to Robert and Amanda (Colvin) Gant of Dodge City, KS on January 28, 2013.

Marriages

Chroniger – Layton. Tyler Jennings Chroniger and Jennifer Elizabeth Layton were united in marriage on November 10, 2012 at the Shiloh (NJ) SDB Church. Rev. Donald Chroniger, father of the groom, officiated.

Kelleher – Olson. Jason Kelleher and Juliet Olson were united in marriage on November 10, 2012 at the Berlin (NY) SDB Church. Pastor Matthew Olson, father of the bride, and Pastor Joshua Michaels, officiated.

Center on Ministry updates

SDB Polity Institute:

Eight students have signed up and are participating in the Institute on SDB Polity. Online participation began February 3, 2013 and will end May 24. This is followed by an intensive week at the Center in Janesville, June 2-7. Please pray for clear minds and God's direction as they study about how SDBs do church.

SDB Pastors Conference:

The Seventh Day Baptist Pastors Conference, held every two years, is being hosted in Shiloh, NJ, April 23-27. The theme is "Seeing With God's Eyes," with special guest Dr. Ralph Mackintosh (SDB Conf. President).

Seminary Students:

Our eleven seminary students are studying hard. Please continue to keep the students and their families in your prayers. Thank you so much.

Pastoral Transitions:

Steve Saunders (Nortonville KS) has retired.

Bill Burks back as interim at the Remembrance SDB Church, Ft. Worth, TX.

Jeff Bloedel is no longer the pastor at Albion, WI.

John Pethtel (Metro Atlanta, GA) is going to Colorado Springs, CO in June. **SR**

For those branching out beyond Facebook, here are some other ways to connect with SDBs:

Pinterest: www.pinterest.com/7thDayBaptists

Twitter: www.twitter.com/7thDayBaptists

Google+: gplus.to/7thDayBaptists

Tumblr: 7thdaybaptists.tumblr.com

Vimeo: vimeo.com/7thdaybaptists

Oh yeah, and we're still on **Facebook** at

www.facebook.com/7thDayBaptists

Want to get the weekly
SDB E-newsletter?

Keep up with the latest
SDB news by e-mail!
Contact us at social@seventhdaybaptist.org
to be on the mailing list.
Send news to the same
address so everyone
can be informed!

KEVIN'S

CORNER

From Peter to leader

Over the last month or so, I've been preaching my way through the letter of 1 Peter. The apostle wrote to encourage new believers in Asia who were undergoing terrible persecution for their faith.

He challenged the young Christians to continue believing in something grand—to believe in a grand purpose for this world and for their lives. But how could he bring hope from their suffering?

Peter preached about the resurrection, an event he knew something about. He taught about

the resurrection not as some isolated miracle of the past, but as a current reality.

How could this help them in their oppressed condition? Peter laid out a fascinating formula that would lead them to hope. Here's how it went:

- These Christians were suffering.
- They were suffering for their faith.
- Their faith was in the resurrected Christ.
- His resurrection provided for their resurrection.
- Their resurrection gave them new birth.
- Their new birth gave them hope!

Their suffering *could* lead to hope.

As I read through this letter, I couldn't help but notice that Peter used a ton of Old Testament references and imagery. Wasn't this the unschooled, brash fisherman? How did he become a powerful, persuasive writer of theology? He had ***been with Jesus***.

Peter had seen Jesus turn to the Word of God when confronting the religious leaders. He saw

Jesus use the Word as the basis of lifestyle and choices.

So Peter called his readers to drink the pure milk of the Word—and not to stop there. They were to taste and see that it was good, come closer to Jesus, and then grow and become living stones in the church, the church that was headed by the Cornerstone of Jesus.

Just as their path to hope was a progression, so was their path to becoming “priests.” These persecuted and outnumbered believers were to grow from infants to being bricks in the church's spiritual structure. It would take some “stepping stones,” with a lot of “getting rid”

and “putting on.” They were not to be satisfied with where they were spiritually. They needed to keep growing into the fabric of the church body.

As Peter was mentored by Jesus, it was his turn to instill faith and leadership in others. It must have worked; we're still living out this faith 2,000 years later.

Those who are mature in the faith—the living

stones of the church—need to encourage others to step into positions of leadership. We should “do Blunch” as Matt Olson suggests on page 4; “Be a Timothy, Pursue a Paul” as Dusty Mackintosh encourages on page 6; and “Invest for Eternity” following the lead of John Pethtel on page 9.

Thanks to the leadership of Jesus, the leadership of Peter, and the leading of the Holy Spirit, we can be “a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God.” We may continue, here in the 21st century, to “declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” Once we were “not a people,” but now we are the “people of God.”

May we lead, teach others to lead, and lead all to Christ.





The Offer of Salvation

Vibrant artwork lays out seven Facts to real—and *eternal*—life. Powerful Bible references point readers to their need for Christ and his sacrifice, ending with an invitation to become part of the closest SDB congregation.

Each 20-page booklet is only 20 cents (plus postage). Please call for larger orders so we can calculate the shipping costs. Or, go to the on-line store at our website and the checkout system will calculate the shipping for you.

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