

Sabbath Recorder

Another year is dawning:
Dear Father, let it be,
In working or in waiting,
Another year with Thee;
Another year of progress,
Another year of praise,
Another year of proving
Thy presence all the days.

Another year of mercies,
Of faithfulness and grace;
Another year of gladness
In the shining of Thy face;
Another year of leaning
Upon Thy loving breast;
Another year of trusting,
Of quiet, happy rest.

Another year of service,
Of witness for Thy love;
Another year of training
For holier work above.
Another year is dawning:
Dear Father, let it be,
On earth or else in heaven,
Another year for Thee.

— *Another Year Is Dawning*
Text: Frances Ridley Havergal

Pethtel Announced as Director of Church Development & Pastoral Services

The General Council has announced the hiring of Rev. John Pethtel as Director of Church Development & Pastoral Services, effective January 1, 2015. This new position reports to Executive Director Rob Appel and includes responsibilities for church development, new contacts, leadership development, and ministry services to new and existing SDB churches and pastors.

Pethtel is a graduate of Salem International University (formerly Salem College) and Denver Seminary and has been an ordained SDB pastor for over five years. He is currently serving as the lead pastor of Springs-Life SDB Church in Colorado Springs, CO.

Recently Pethtel has served SDBs as Conference President (2012), chairman of the Standing Committee on Christian Social Action and Disaster Relief (2010-2012), Sabbath Promotion chairman (2010-2012), member of Church Planting Task Force (2013-present), and on General Council (2010-present).

Upon accepting the position, John shared his passion saying, "I am committed to advancing the vision and



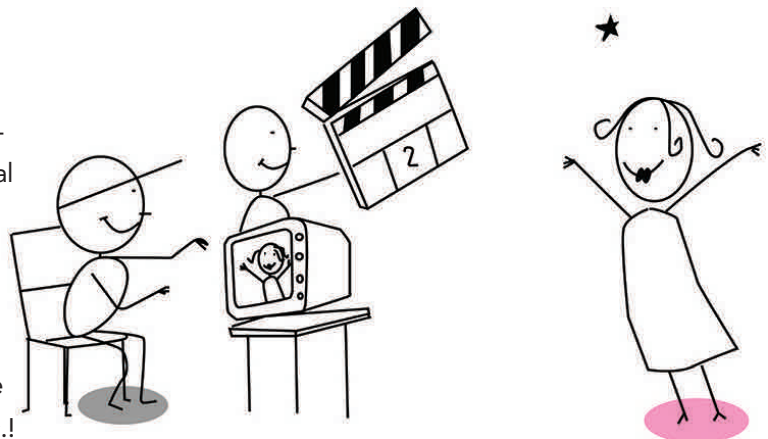
mission of the SDB General Conference by helping to create a culture in which SDBs see the value of having healthy leaders leading healthy churches that plant healthy churches."

Starting January 1, 2015, General Council Vice-Chairman, Susie Fox, will assume the role of Chairman of General Council. David Davis (Seattle, WA) has been appointed by the General Council to fill the interim vacancy left by John until our General Conference sessions in 2015. [SR](#)

READY FOR A CHANGE?

How about something different?

President Bill Probasco would like to challenge our churches to film a little commercial. Highlight an outreach; show off your youth; do a 30-second infomercial on what your church does week-in and week-out. It doesn't need to be long, just original. Parody some classic commercial; make up a new jingle for your Sabbath School class. BE CREATIVE. Then post it to the Conference Facebook Page! We'll cross promote you on the main SDB website, twitter, Instagram, etc.!



Maybe you'll even see yourself during Conference week...!

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Beginnings
& Endings:

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Every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end.

— Text: "Closing Time," by Semisonic

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; SDB Web site: www.seventhdaybaptist.org

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Patricia Cruzan
Interim Editor
sdbsr@seventhdaybaptist.org

Contributing Editors:

Rob Appel, Clinton R. Brown, Andrew J. Camenga,
Elianna Chroniger, Katrina Goodrich, Nicholas J.
Kersten, Bill Probasco, William Villalpando

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"Much of life involves a series of changes, some of which are large, others of which are small."

**"That was then;
this is now."**

"...some of which are large, others of which are small."

Much of life involves a series of changes, some of which are large, others of which are small. Many of those changes test our ability to respond with wise choices, consistent with our commitment to God. Dealing with changes, whether large or small, and making the choices they require, is often a matter of perspective, of viewing life (as much as possible) from God's perspective and realizing the wonder of His grace along the way. In some cases, it means recognizing a particular change is permanent, and there is no going back: That was then; this is now.

When first diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis, I was a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin in Madison and knew nothing about the disease. A doctor at the hospital there recommended a series of steroid infusions he said might force it into remission. I followed his advice and thought no more about the matter, going on to finish my degree and continuing my involvement in the martial arts, an activity I had begun sometime earlier.

Eighteen years later, having been in pastoral ministry for quite a while, the MS returned—there is no (further) treatment for the kind I have—and I steadily lost the ability to move about without assistance. (After forty years, I taught my final martial arts class last year, from a walker.) Noting the

obvious physical difficulty I was having, the deacons and elders at the church wisely recommended that I seek early retirement. The physical change is permanent, and there is no going back: That was then; this is now.

To be sure, "now" is certainly different from what I experienced before, but God has not changed. He still enables me to choose how I will respond to this change. While I miss being physically active and being more fully engaged in ministry, I also realize that the more I can align my perspective with His perspective, the more my response to this change will accord with His will and the more I realize the wonder of His grace along the way.

The change has not affected everything. While no longer teaching martial arts, there are still opportunities to minister. I do not get out much, but people come to see me, which I enjoy (although why they do so is often a mystery to me). I am also able to post studies and sermons to my blog that would otherwise remain in notebooks. (My wife says that I now have time to read for pleasure, which I have not done since college and grad school.) While the future is unknown, it need not be unproductive, and I trust that my continuing walk with God will yet yield fruit, because that was then; this is now. SR

— Rev. Paul Manuel, Ph.D.
German SDB Church
Salemville, PA

Every New Beginning...

— Pastor Scott Hausrath
North Loup SDB Church, NE

I didn't want to, but I had to. After all, how could I say no to God? So, in February of 2012, I moved from the Seattle metro area (population 3.6 million) to North Loup, Nebraska (population 300). Why did I make such a radical move? Because I was asked to.

The Seventh Day Baptist congregation in N. Loup was searching for a pastor and they invited me to consider working with them in this capacity. As I met with them in the fall of 2011, I saw what wonderful people they are, and I felt a strong attraction to their area. However, I knew from experience that being a pastor is a huge thing to ask of anyone. At that point in my life, I was not looking to make such an all-consuming commitment. I would be lying if I told you that I was excited about the prospect of serving as a pastor again.

However, no matter how I spun it in my mind, I could not escape the reality that saying no to the folks in N. Loup would essentially be saying no to God. How could I say no to God? The sacrifice of being a pastor is nothing compared to the sacrifice of laying down One's life on a cross of agonizing pain, shame, and derision.

So I said yes to a new beginning, albeit with hesitation. I certainly wasn't John Wayne, skillfully riding into town on a gorgeous steed to save the day. I was Don Knotts, chinless and deer-in-the-headlights as I drove my Japanese econobox into the heartland of America. I had no idea how God would help this West Coast boy adjust to life in the Corn Belt. The closest Starbucks was 50 miles away!

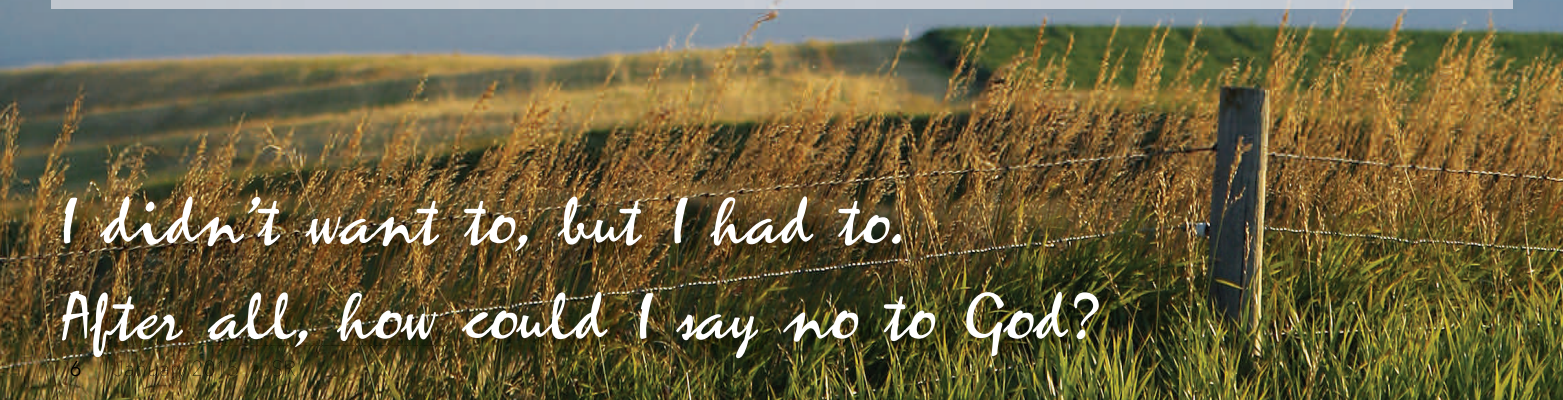
One of the first things I noticed about N. Loup was its people. They welcomed me to their community with open arms. It wasn't just the church members who were happy to see me. It was pretty much the entire town. Over the last three years, God has been working powerfully in my life through these precious people. The hospitality, acceptance, and love they have showered upon me have pretty much made culture shock a non-issue for me. God has provided me with a people, and through these people, He has richly met my needs. He has proven Himself faithful many times over.

God has also provided me with a place. Central Nebraska is an amazingly gorgeous area to live. Contrary to the rumors, it's not as flat as a pancake. There are peaks and valleys, and the big sky effect produces some of the most stunning sunrises and sunsets I have ever seen, anywhere. Every day God greets us with a fresh canvas of natural beauty, reminding us that He's right here, right now. The roads and scenery here are perfect for riding motorcycles, one of my all-time favorite activities. I can enjoy riding bikes in my new place, just as I did in my old place. Having such a phenomenal place to call home has made my transition less of a burden and more of a joy.

Finally, God has provided me with a purpose. Though I opened this new chapter in my life with trepidation, I am currently working my way through this chapter with affirmation and confirmation. Over and over again I feel the awesome privilege of being in gospel ministry. Yes, there are facets of ministry that are draining and disappointing, but there are other facets that take my breath away with an almost giddy sense of joy. I have been given a purpose that gets me up in the morning: the incredible privilege of representing to this community the One who created each of us and everything we see around us. I did not earn this purpose by any action or attitude on my part. God gives this purpose to each of His children. We are all ambassadors of Jesus Christ, sharing with others the astounding truth that they can be reconciled to God. Though we cannot fully fathom this reality, in Jesus Christ we have become the righteousness of God. (2 Corinthians 5:20-21)

Over the last three years, as I've embarked on this new course in my life, I've been experiencing a deeper understanding that life is about much more than who I am and what I do. I have the privilege, the honor, the joy of being connected to God, to His people, and to what He is doing in and through His people.

In their song "Closing Time," Semisonic sings, "Every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end." Whatever beginning you're currently ending, I wholeheartedly believe that our faithful Lord will walk with you into your new beginning. He will provide you with a people, a place, and a purpose. Our God loves us and never leaves us. [SR](#)



*I didn't want to, but I had to.
After all, how could I say no to God?*



*I found it reassuring in this new season
to know that God is with me.*

A New Season

It's been about a year and half ago I started a new season, after 32 years of full time employment with IBM, called "retirement." This also correlated (by design) with our four children all out of the proverbial "nest." What a change for both my husband, Dean, and myself! I call it a season, because I know there may come a day when we have grandchildren to visit or parents to care for or (hopefully not) our own health concerns that will tie us down. But for now, we have a lot of freedom that we never had before — it's almost overwhelming some days!

With these changes has come a period of re-evaluation for me. What can (or should) I do differently as I have more time and less income? What new interests and activities could I develop? How should Dean and I use our "together" time? What about all those things I didn't get around to before because "I didn't have enough time"?

As reassuring as it was when I was working and travelling to many different locations, I also found it reassuring in this new season to know that God is with me, God is real, and God is the same for me and the world around me! To answer the re-evaluation questions, I just need to draw close to Him and ask Him the same questions as in the previous season... "What do you want me to be doing? How can I use the assets and gifts you've given me?" And ask for the same help I needed in the previous season... "Provide me with wisdom. Help me to know when to act and when to wait. Give me the self-control to do the right thing."

As of this writing, I'm busier than ever but enjoying the new experiences with a lot less stress. I've been travelling, spending more time with parents, praying more, working with the SDB General Council, helping people at our church, discovering our family history, and enjoying the company of my wonderful husband! I'm looking forward to whatever else God has in store for this season. [SR](#)

— Susie Fox
Pataskala SDB Church, OH

I think about God's provision and perfect timing every day...



WHY NOW?

“Go home today. Have a biopsy tomorrow,” was the advice of two ER doctors in Janesville, WI, on opening day of Conference 1992. I had found a lump on my neck during the Conference President’s sermon in Milton, WI, on the previous day and asked Dad to take me to the ER, hoping to get an antibiotic and be on my merry way.

“Why now?” I screamed inwardly. It was easier to understand why NOT now: As Women’s Board President I had responsibilities during the coming week. I had just signed a contract for my first full-time job in 14 years, to begin September 1. Counting on my new job, we had purchased a second vehicle and put braces in two teenagers’ mouths. I had just attended my 25-year class reunion in White Cloud, MI, where middle-aged classmates affirmed, “You look great!” Why now?

Why Now Answer 1: We loaded our station wagon with disappointed offspring and headed back to New Jersey, a 900-mile trip, a full week sooner than we had planned. Vice President Ruth Probasco was ready and able to carry out “my” responsibilities at Conference.

Why Now Answer 2: As a long-term sub during the 1991-92 school year, the Board of Education had been forced to give my family health benefits beginning May 2. With zero-to-minimal coverage in previous months and a diagnosis of Stage 3 Hodgkin’s disease, God’s providence was unmistakable!

Why Now Answer 3: I was able to continue working without loss of income. The Board had recently established a sick bank policy and I was the second one to benefit from it! Even though I was new to the system, coworkers were allowed to donate their sick days to my account. I missed 4-6 days each month for seven months and was paid for all of them due to the generosity of 30-some new friends. Who orchestrated all of that at just the right time?

Why Now Answer 4: My illness came at just the time in my life when I needed affirmation of my worth as a Child of God. Church family, neighbors and other friends provided monetary love gifts, transportation to Philadelphia for treatments, prayers, encouragement and food. Many even told me I “looked great” under my wig and makeup. (Later, I saw a picture of myself and recognized some “little white lies”!) Eventually my kids forgave me for “ruining their summer.”

Now, 22 years later, I think about God’s provision and perfect timing every day and try to encourage others who are asking, “Why now?” SR

— Donna S. Bond
Shiloh SDB Church, NJ

This gives me a sad feeling...

As you may know, the Board of Christian Education is leaving Alfred Station, NY to be incorporated into the General Conference Office in Janesville, WI. This gives me a sad feeling — to see it leave this area. Since 1940 there has been a member of the Rev. Harley Sutton family serving on the Board in several different capacities. Rev. Sutton was a director who then became Executive Secretary. He served until 1949 when he was unable to continue because of his health. His wife, Madge Sutton, served for 30 years in several different offices.

Harley's children: Lyle, Lola and Luan (me, for 24 years) have all served as Directors. Lola also was editor of the Beacon. Madge's second husband, Donald VanHorn, purchased the building for the use of the Board as well as serving as a Director and Vice President. Harley's grandchildren: Terry Ellis and Peggy Sutton Chroniger and Peggy's husband, Rev. Ken Chroniger, have served as Directors. And now, great-granddaughter, Elianna Chroniger, is serving.

In 1960, I served as one of the first Youth Field Workers for the BCE and have been the Administrative Assistant since 2008. So, you can see why I am sad, knowing all this family history. The Sutton family has been committed to the influence the BCE has had over the young and old of this Denomination. I pray that God will be with those who will be helping to continue the important work of the Board of Christian Education. SR

— Luan Ellis
Alfred Station SDB Church, NY

I pray that God will be with them.

We may not always know what God has planned.

How did you fare over the holidays? It seems that during the holidays travel exponentially increases, families gather, and while we are supposed to reflect on all that we have to be thankful for, we often get caught up in the pitfalls of family drama, shopping, or if you're "lucky" some strange combination of both! How do you cope?

I was recently watching an episode of "Live Free or Die." This is a reality show on the National Geographic Channel that follows some folks who live "off the grid." In this particular episode, a gentleman by the name of Colbert, who the crew from NatGeo had been following, returned to find his home he had built over the last 20 years had burned to the ground. The utter shock and sadness was palpable. Imagine going about your day and returning home to find everything you owned to be in a charred pile of ashes...oh, and have a camera crew with a camera jammed in your face gathering the reaction. Ugh. How would you cope with that?

In all the shock, Colbert began picking through the ashes where he found some items that survived the fire. Sadly, his reaction is one I am not sure I would have had. Colbert, when faced with the prospect of being able to recover a frying pan, some axe heads, and a gun, tearfully states "I'm rich! I am blessed. I have more than enough! All I can do is be thankful I have so much!"

I can assure you I most likely would not have coped as well when faced with something similar. What does the Bible have to say about coping?

I Thessalonians 5:16-18 says: "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

When faced with tough circumstances, it seems that the LAST thing we want to do is be thankful. Yet the Bible tells us that's what we are to do. In the New Testament, we see that Paul and Silas, after being beaten, arrested and thrown into prison, in the midst of this, they are still singing praises to the Lord. I am not talking about just amongst themselves I am talking, at midnight, belting it out like they are in the American Idol finals. Notice something, notice that they were thankful IN their circumstance not FOR their circumstance. In our own lives things may not always be the way we think they ought to be. When bad things happen, it seems that there's nothing to really be thankful for and that may in fact be right. We shouldn't be thankful that our house burned down, but IN that circumstance, there can be things to be thankful for. That is what we as Christians are called to do.

God doesn't leave us just hanging with the notion, "Hey bad stuff is going to happen and I expect you to be thankful." He loves us far too much for that be His only suggestion for us to use for coping. He also promises us that all things work together for good for those who love Him (Romans 8:28). Notice that's a big picture statement. Sure the house may have burned down, but maybe that allows you to be a strong witness and lead someone to Christ. We may not always know what God has planned. But we know if we trust Him, we may seemingly lose some fights but the battle belongs to the Lord! So as we reflect back on the holidays, when you are faced with daunting prospects of things from holiday travel, turkey cooking mishaps, and even that family/shopping drama combo we mentioned earlier, remember to be thankful IN your circumstance. Although it may be sometimes tough to see, God works all things together for good and that's something we all should keep in mind as we cope. [SR](#)

— Jeremiah Owen
Director of Communications



Jeremy Evans writes children's stories...you may remember "Lionel Rathbone's Incredible Growing Nose Hairs" published in the November *Sabbath Recorder*. His stories are fun and, at times, a little outrageous. But there is something to be learned from Jeremy's storytelling if you look close enough.

Another story that Jeremy has written is called "The Incredible Inflating Hen." It is humorous and despite laughing at it, it spoke to me. (If you want to read all the story, go to Jeremy's blog at drumhellerstoryteller.blogspot.com) I am going to quote only a few parts of the story here:

One morning as the hens were laying eggs in the henhouse, Geraldine set down her coffee mug and shook her head at an old hen across the aisle. "Bernadette, dear," she said. "It fairly breaks my heart to see you strain every day, trying to lay an egg."

Bernadette looked up and smiled patiently as she knitted a scarf.

"Geraldine is right," said Henrietta, setting down her crossword puzzle. "It's been almost a year since you've laid an egg. Don't you think it's time to admit your egg-laying days are over?"

The henhouse grew quiet as everyone tried to hear what Bernadette would say.

"I may be old," said Bernadette, "but I'm not ready to retire. I have one more good egg left in me. And no matter how long it takes, I'm not giving up until I've laid it."

So, there you have it...that's where it got my attention. "I may be old, but I'm not ready to retire."

I began to learn graphic arts while working in the SDB Publishing House in Plainfield, NJ. So I have long had an interest in the denominational publications and especially the *Sabbath Recorder*. When I heard that the General Council wanted to hire an interim editor for the SR, my reaction was that I really would like to do that and decided to apply. Like Bernadette, I was not ready to retire!

That's when all the "hens" in my head started in:

"If you wait much longer it's going to be hardboiled, dear," said Edwina, who always joked at the most inappropriate times. A few hens snickered discreetly.

We are talking about God leading and directing our lives in this edition of the SR. So, yes, I was plagued with doubts. But an interesting thing happened. God also started talking to me: *With God's power working in us, God can do much, much more than anything we can ask or imagine. (Ephesians 3:20 NCV)*

And Bernadette said: *"On the contrary. Since I've spent so much time working on it, it will be my finest egg yet."*

Then, through a series of unbelievable mishaps and an allergy to worm paste (you really do need to read the entire story...), Bernadette delivered a lovely egg...much to everyone's surprise!!

Bernadette was as astonished as everyone else as she gazed at the egg in her nest. Every day for a whole year she had strained and toiled, patiently enduring the taunts of the other hens. But as she admired her egg, Bernadette felt a glow of satisfaction in her heart. It had all been worth it.

Later, when the other hens had recovered from the surprise and resumed laying eggs, Henrietta called across the aisle, "Do you suppose you'll retire now that you've laid your egg?"

"Why no," said Bernadette with a gleam in her eye. "Now I'm going to hatch it."

God did give me much, much more and here I am interim editor of the *Sabbath Recorder*.

With God working in me...

I'm going to hatch it!! 

— Patricia Cruzan
SR Interim Editor



much, much more...



Approaching Tetelestai:

Thinking Biblically about Seasons of Change

This past May, I graduated from seminary, bringing a decade long journey to a close and ending a season of my life. As that season was ending, and as I have entered a new season in my life, I have spent a good amount of time thinking about “what it all means.” I hope that these reflections—both from my own journey and from the Scriptures—will encourage you to approach the seasons of change in your life with new enthusiasm and hope.

To begin, a question: can anything ever be truly finished in our world? This question is not as simple as it might seem at first glance. Certainly projects and tasks are completed. We hand in our assignments in school as children and receive a grade. We receive compensation and awards for work that is “done.” We have our chores and jobs that must be done as part of our daily life. But anyone who has ever mowed a lawn or washed laundry knows that such tasks are never really complete. Even in places like education where degrees are conferred, those degrees are really only benchmarks in a much larger learning process—they don’t communicate completeness, they communicate attainments of incremental standards. How many times has the thing we placed in our “done” pile crawled back off and demanded more from us? Aren’t most of the things we do in this life only ever “provisionally complete?”

In my own life, and especially as I journeyed through the early part of my seminary career, the realization that much that I thought was finished was not, led me to

despair. I originally considered seminary like finishing school for Christians. You go, you do the work, they teach you the secrets that will unlock the universe and the answers to any question that could be put to you, and then you get a degree and go home a finished product. But I began to realize that no matter how much I worked to get things done, the tasks would never stop coming; that no matter how much effort I expended, more would be required. My life (and my faith) became a grim parade of impossibility. I feared that nothing would ever be finished—that my life would be a long list of things I didn’t have the time or talents or courage or fortitude to ever complete. My tombstone would include an asterisk on my death date, and beneath it, the asterisk would denote a life “unfinished.” Depression settled over me.

Fittingly enough, it was the very seminary training which partially drove me to despair that provided the way out as well, in the form of studying the Biblical Greek of John’s Gospel (as odd as that may sound!). According to John, there is at least one thing which has really been finished. In John 19, John quotes Jesus’ last word prior to His death on the cross. The word is ‘tetelestai’ (Τετέλεσται) and it is used by Jesus in verse 30:

²⁸ Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I am thirsty.” ²⁹ A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ lips. ³⁰ When he had

Can anything ever be truly finished in our world?

received the drink, Jesus said, **"It is finished."** With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

(John 19:28-30 NIV, emphasis mine)

The three emphasized words above translate the single word "tetelestai" in the Greek of the New Testament. Much could be said about this word, but there is only one thing about this I want to point out: it is in the perfect tense. The significance of that here is that Jesus really is saying it is done forever, never to be changed again. He is pronouncing His earthly work complete, and completed for all time. Nothing more will ever need to be done to finish the work of salvation accomplished on that cross. While the root form of this verb is not uncommon, this exact form appears only twice in the entire New Testament, and they are both here, in verses 28 and 30.

As the decade of my seminary journey passed, I began to mine hope from this statement of our Lord. In the beginning, it was a promise of future comfort: one day everything would be done, even if I couldn't complete anything. But as the truth of this passage soaked into the deep places in me, I realized that it was much more than it seemed to me at first.

The second layer of understanding this truth came to me gift-wrapped in the form of my work for the Historical Society. (I'm aware there is no longer any way for me to avoid the charge that I am a very peculiar person.) As I surveyed the enormity of God's plan recorded in those old books, it became clear that God would be severely limited in the work He could do in our world if He was limited to doing only what one person could do in one lifetime. Instead, the Lord Jesus came Himself and lived and died and was resurrected to show another way. When we join in the work of His body through our local churches, our Conference, and other Christians in this world, we join in the fulfillment of God's unfolding plan through all of history as He brings all things to completion in Himself.

Church history clearly demonstrates that God brings huge movements of His Spirit to completion through the work of His people, though sometimes these huge moves of God are completed in ways that would be unthinkable to individuals as they are happening. The world changes and believers are required to respond in ways

that sometimes make them extremely uncomfortable. And yet, that change, and the discomfort which accompanies it, is part of the process that God uses to bring His plans to completion over decades, centuries and millenia. God called Moses to leave the life he knew and shepherd a people—and God called the people of Israel to leave their slavery to follow Him through Moses. Both Moses and the nation of Israel occasionally had extreme reactions to this calling to embrace the necessary change. Yet it was the only way to achieve God's plan for them as individuals, for the nation, and for the entire unfolding of the plan that was revealed after. Without extreme and violent political tumult in England in the 17th century, Seventh Day Baptists may never have existed. Without the spur of new colonization imposing distance between friends and families in post-revolutionary America, our Conference may never have formed. History repeats the lesson for us over and over: obedience and committed response to God in our changing world is part of how He is bringing His eternal plans to completion.

But there is a much more intimate application of this broad principle. When Jesus says on the cross that His work is finished, He is also making a promise to you if you believe in Him: one day, you will be finished. Despite the fact that we all go through seasons which sometimes include painful changes, one day, the seasons will cease, and because of His completed work on the cross, we too will be completed. We will find ourselves perfected and ready for eternity with Him. All of our following of Jesus in this world is leading to a time when we can lay it down and really be "done." We are all "approaching tetelestai."

My encouragement for you today as you read this is to avoid the temptation to despair about change and incompleteness in your life, your church, or our world by clinging to the promise and example of Jesus Christ. Follow after Him as He leads you to work for His Kingdom's completion and until He brings that work to completion in you on the day you depart to be with Him. If you draw breath, there is work to do! Be encouraged as you labor that your labor is not in vain—He is bringing all things to completion (Php 1:3-6), even as He makes all things new (Rev. 21:5-6). SR

— Rev. Nicholas J. Kersten
Director of History & Education

A Resolution



One evening, early in January, a family was gathered at their dining room table for supper. Harold Jones, the father of this quaint group, asked his family what kind of resolutions they were planning on carrying out for the next year. His wife, Kristi, was ready with her answer in a heartbeat. She said, enthusiastically, "I joined the gym downtown, and I'm going to work out every morning for 45 minutes after I take the kids to school!" Harold smiled and allowed his eldest son, Jeremy, to answer next. Jeremy, a freshman at the local college, gave his dad a quick look and said, "I was thinking about maybe joining the school's soccer team. I guess that my resolution is to work hard and make the team." Kristi squealed in delight at her son's proposition. Harold chuckled at his wife's reaction and moved on to his daughter Delia. He questioned, "Delia, how about you?" Delia, a junior in high school, shied back into her chair and asked if her dad could come back to her. He eagerly agreed in order to save her some embarrassment. Next up was Mark. Being a seventh grade boy, Mark thought he knew best and quickly shouted out his resolution, "I promise to have a girlfriend this year!" Kristi choked on the water she had just taken a sip of, and Harold said, "Mark, I think you're a little young to be making that kind of a promise." Delia was giggling as she said, "Dad I'm ready! My resolution is to make more friends at school! I never have anyone to talk to and I think some friends to hang out with might make me like school a little more." Kristi gushed, "Oh Delia, that's a wonderful idea!" Harold nodded in agreement and moved on to their youngest, Melody. Melody was only in fourth grade. However, she knew a lot for one so young. Harold inquired, "Melody, honey, what is your resolution for this year?" Melody thought for a while, and finally

said, "Well, first I have a question." Mark groaned, and Kristi shot him a look while saying, "Alright sweetheart, go ahead." Melody took a deep breath in and spoke. "I don't really understand what the point of all this is. Jeremy might make the team, and Delia might make friends, but Mark won't get a girlfriend, and Mommy always says she's going to exercise and then she forgets. My question is, why do we promise these things if we just forget about them?" Everyone was quiet. No one had thought about it that way before. Harold was stunned into silence, so Kristi replied, "Melody, you have a very good point. I will get busy and forget, so I think I take back my resolution." The family nodded in quiet agreement. Melody smiled and said, "You don't have to Mommy and Daddy. I think I promise to eat more cookies! I know I can keep that one!" They all laughed as they finished dinner together.

1 Timothy 4:12 Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith, purity, show yourself an example of those who believe. SR

— Elianna Chroniger
Alfred Station SDB Church, NY

The Beacon

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





Patiently Wait



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

When I was a little girl, I used to wake up early Saturday morning before everyone else. In order to keep me from waking up everyone else in the house (I was not quiet as a child either) and to keep me out of the way while they were getting ready, my parents told me I could go downstairs and choose a video to watch. I didn't even need to ask! There was a video series I frequently chose called "Quigley's Village." The plot involved a man with his friends and pets (who were puppets) learning about God from Bible stories and life experiences. On one episode they sang a song entitled "Patiently Wait." The song is my most vivid memory about the episode. As you may have guessed, I remember that episode was about learning patience. I was probably 3 or 4 at the time when I began this process of learning patience and at 25 I'm still working on it.

Patience is defined as the ability to endure waiting, delay, or provocations without becoming annoyed or upset, and to persevere calmly when faced with difficulty. Patience is also defined as a Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). Just because patience is a fruit of the Spirit doesn't mean that all of a sudden when you accept Christ you become a paragon of patience. In some instances the Spirit may intervene and bless you with a supernatural patience for a season, but often that is not how it works.

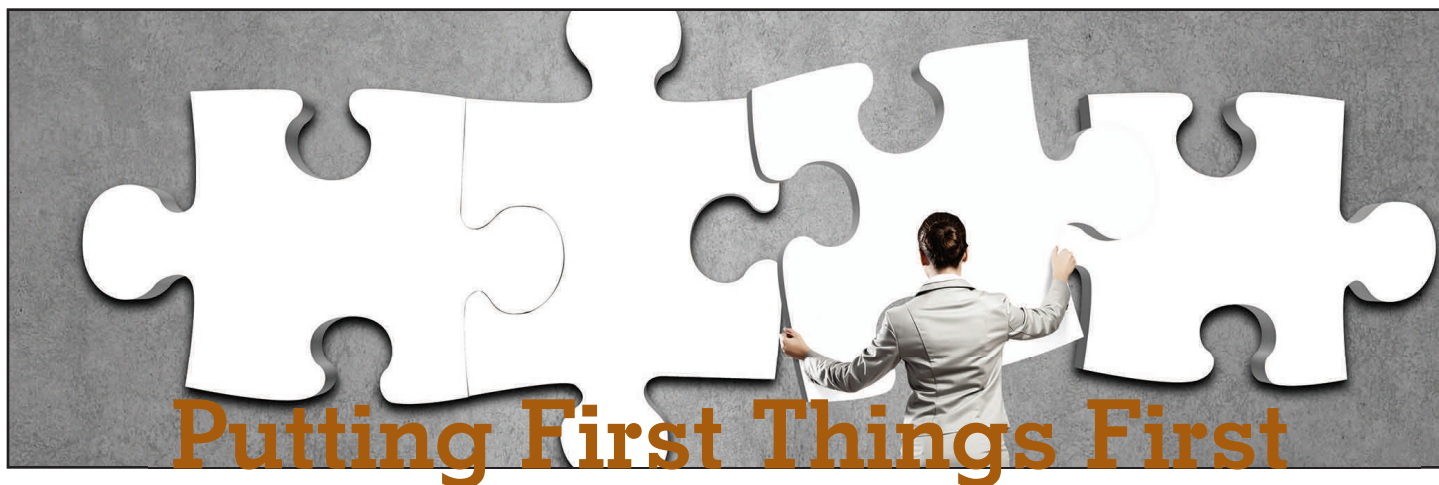
Practice makes patience. Just as with literal fruit you begin with a seed. You must nurture and grow it before you can reap it. So it is with patience. It takes time and intentional practice to be able to exercise it daily. Many times we miss or neglect the opportunity.

There is no denying the fact that we live in a fast paced world. Everything is at our fingertips and the prevalent attitude is that waiting is a waste of time. And time is a precious and valuable non-renewable commodity. This attitude does not cast patience in a positive light because waiting wastes time that would be better spent in a dozen different ways. Patience is not a cultural value.

I find myself regressing in this sort of environment. I work in what is, for the most part, a fast paced environment. Those who are quick and efficient with problem solving skills tend to do well. Others who lag behind tend to feel a little like dead weight. And I get annoyed because there is only so much time in a day and a whole list of things that need to be done. That is the definition of losing patience. And realizing how often I've been losing patience lately, rather than building it up, makes me feel chagrined.

It turns out a little patience goes a long way. The more I use it the less annoyed I become at those around me. It's time to start practicing what I preach and build others up instead of breaking them with my impatience. But that doesn't mean I am just going to sit back and let things be. I chose to practice active patience where I am able. What can I do to improve the situation instead of getting annoyed and upset? I can be a catalyst for what needs to happen by realizing and accepting that things may still take longer than I want.

Every time I think about patience a little song plays in the back of my head. Patiently wait — and I am going to start listening. SR



The New Year is often a time that people reflect on the direction their life has been headed and look at their goals for the coming year. Establishing goals is an effective early step to accomplish the things that we feel are important. However, many times we do not give serious evaluation to the goals themselves.

For example: a merchant ship captain could determine that the coast of north Africa was a reachable goal from Spain, set the course, and follow good navigation procedures to reach that goal. However, if the ship was designed for trans-Atlantic voyages, and it had a cargo that would generate the greatest return if it was taken to New York City, reaching the goal of Africa may not be in the captain's best interest. Africa might be the best option, but he would need to determine what was important to him and set his goals accordingly.

As followers of Jesus, our goals should align with who God wants us to be and where He would have us go. The world generates oodles of messages promoting earthly mindset ideas of success and goals to achieve. We only live once and should not waste our opportunity to partner with God in what He has defined as important for us. The important things to God are living lives that minister in Christ's love to those around us and reaching out to those God has called us to carry the truth of who He is and how important they are to Him. If our goals don't reflect these basic principles of follow-

ing Jesus, our walk might be better categorized as watching Jesus from a distance rather than actually following Him.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. — Romans 12:2

In the Canary Islands of Spain resides an indigenous Seventh Day Baptist pastor named Luis de le Cruz. Luis runs a local non-profit book store that generates revenue for projects to help those in need of food, clothing, and essential medical supplies. Unemployment and financial struggles in the Canaries has made it a hard place to operate and minister. Moving to a place with more opportunities, like Spain's capital, Madrid, has crossed his mind. But having God recently affirm Luis' calling to be in the Canaries makes achievable goals like relocating to Madrid to get a good paying job irrelevant for Luis.

Having confidence that the goals we set are set as obedient children of our Father in heaven is really the first step to achieving the plans that God has for us. Navigating that course may be challenging, but achieving the goals God has set for us is ultimately more fulfilling than those that may give temporary satisfaction. ^[SR]



Planting the Grace SDB Church in Minneapolis, MN

— Pastor Greg Olson

In Bible College, I remember questioning why we, as Christians, kept most of the laws that Jesus Himself did, but not all. I understood that many commandments wouldn't apply to me directly — many are related to sacrifices and other activities in the Temple, and I'm not a priest. Others are only for women. But, of the remaining commandments that could be applied to me, I had been taught to obey all but a select few. I was taught that I could ignore the dietary laws and laws pertaining to special days — like the weekly Sabbath and the annual festivals (which are also called Sabbaths in scripture) because they were all “ceremonial” and not “moral” laws. But nobody could show me in Scripture how to determine which were which.

Years later, after I was married, my wife and I began to look into this question together when we were introduced to the Messianic movement. Messianic congregations keep those last few commandments that most other Christians ignore.

While we enjoyed some great teaching, at one of these congregations in particular, we found that their incorporation of Jewish culture — while not biblically wrong — led many Christians to believe that everything they were doing that was different was just cultural (and therefore optional) including the keeping of those last few commandments like the Sabbath. Grieved by this, we felt called to start something new — a church that culturally felt like any church that met on Sunday, but kept all the commandments that applied to us.

From the beginning we saw it as very important that this new church be accountable to a denominational authority because we had seen how some “independent” churches were really just benevolent dictatorships (and some weren't even benevolent). I contacted two different denominations about planting a church with the vision we had without success. The first one was willing to give it a try, but would require that we allow infant

baptism. The second one just said I was trying to promote legalism.

Giving up on planting a church, I remembered hearing about Seventh Day Baptists and thought we might just be able to find a local SDB church to attend. The closest one to us was in Dodge Center, which was about 90 minutes away.

Our first Sabbath there we met the recently retired Dodge Center pastor, Dale Rood, who told us that he was wanting to plant a church in the Twin Cities! From that time, Pastor Dale and I have shared the pulpit here on Sabbaths. I was officially licensed to preach by the Dodge Center SDB Church this summer and made the pastor of Grace SDB Church.

We are currently averaging about 15 people at our weekly services now. With the exception of one life-long SDB and one person that grew up in an independent Sabbath-keeping church, everyone there was raised going to church on Sunday, but came to the Sabbath by their own study of the Word. Needless to say, we have a congregation of Bereans (Acts 17:10-11)!

Every week, after service and before our Christian Education time, we have a potluck lunch. Our service starts at 10am and many times almost everyone is still there at 5pm studying the Bible together and sharing in fellowship. The meals together every week really speed up how quickly relationships form. [SR](#)



Spotlight on Church Planting



"Going Deeper"

Last summer I had the privilege of working at Camp Riverview here in North Loup, Nebraska. On the final morning of Intermediate Camp, one of our 6th - 8th graders wished for a time machine, so we could return to the beginning of the week and experience camp one more time.

Why was this camper so blessed by this year's camp? One factor may have been the size of that camp. We only had six campers, so they were spending their time with a smaller number of people. I believe this enabled them to draw closer to one another, as their connections were deepened by the more concentrated time they spent with each other.

It's very affirming to be popular, to know and be known by a large number of people. I do believe, however, that a deeper affirmation is experienced by those who develop deeper relationships with a smaller number of people.

When we connect with acquaintances, we generally discuss areas of our lives that make us happy. We rarely share with an acquaintance details of a deep struggle we're experiencing. With close friends, however, it's different. Our close friends have more of their lives invested in our lives, so we're more likely to become vulnerable with them. They've paid their dues, so to speak, by being with us through the ups and downs of life. Because of this, we're more likely to trust them with the foundational issues of our lives.

Connecting with people at deeper levels leads to deeper levels of fulfillment for both parties. Are there people in our lives who have been with us through both the good times and the bad times? Do we truly appreciate how much they have invested in us? Do we reciprocate by also investing in them?

Developing deeper relationships in the present is a very effective way of changing the future. It's like having our own time machine. SR

There once was a little girl who was filled with joy and happiness. She loved Jesus and loved who He was creating her to be. She had no doubt in her mind about whether or not God loved her, and she rested in His loving arms daily. Then, a dark cloud came over her and sucked away her joy. She ran away from God, not understanding what was happening and thinking what she did was her fault. She was filled with grief, guilt, and shame. That little girl was me when I was 7 years old. At that time I was sexually abused by one of my family members. That started a cycle of sin that led to hurt and pain that ripped the innocence from me throughout my life. It took years for me to forgive God, forgive myself, and to understand that what had happened to me was not my fault. I look back on everything and I thank God because this whole circumstance eventually drew me so much closer to Him than I was when I was a little girl. But what I can't get out of my head is one question: Where was the church? I was always told "the church isn't a building, it's a group of people." So I ask again, where was the church? Why is the church hiding from sexual sin? Why are we not grabbing ahold of this and exposing it for what it really is? In 1 Corinthians 6:18 it says, "Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body but an immoral man sins against his own body." Sexual sin is crushing people from the inside out. It hurts not only other people but also yourself. There are people sitting in our pews, hurting, with no where to go, thinking that they have nobody that understands what they are going through. And the church isn't talking about it! Why aren't we talking about sexual abuse, pornography addictions, sex outside of marriage, masturbation, and things of the like? The church needs to stop hiding in the dark and start bringing these things into the Light. We need to be open, loving, understanding, and good listeners.

The little girl in the story brought her circumstance into the Light. There is hope. God gets it. Jesus was a man who lived on earth for 33 years. If you are being tempted sexually or in other ways, well you are in good company because Jesus was definitely tempted too. So if you are going through this, He understands everything that we go through, including sexual temptation. He understands when you're hurting because of sexual abuse and He wants to help you through it. Jesus is the Light that can heal the pain and scars of sexual sin. God wants to, and has forgiven you, so that you don't have to live in shame anymore. We have a responsibility as a church to make an environment that is open to any kind of sin, so that it can be brought into the Light and repented of. Church, we are in a battle. We are in God's army so we cannot lose. Let's put on our spiritual armor and get ready to fight because when our commander-in-chief tells me to fight, I'm going to fight. Sex isn't a bad thing, but the devil twisted it to be a bad thing. We can cause some damage if we start bringing this stuff to the Light. Who is with me? Because I'm done playing Satan's game. SR



Young Adult

– *Karissa St.Clair*
The Connecting Church
Milton, WI

Change is good...right?

Another year, another resolution made. That's what we do at New Year's. We make a resolution to change for the better by...dieting; quitting smoking; reading our Bible more; exercising; etc.

But the start of each year also brings changes around us, whether that is a calendar year, school year, or sports year. Students move from grade to grade and the teachers change. Subjects change. Students that were in the class might move away and others might move in. Sports teams go through similar changes. College teams see stars graduate and underclassmen move up. Professional teams lose stars to retirement or free agency. Companies hire new employees and promote (or replace) others. I've mentioned that I coach. Many times I've seen my players graduate to another division, move away, or maybe have an injury that prevents them from participating. Other times my players have improved so much from one season to the next, what may have been a weakness last season is a new-found strength for our team this season.

Our churches are the same way. Members change. Some may move; some may graduate to their heavenly reward; others may no longer have the same level of commitment due to family, job, health, or even interest. As I look back through our church's member directory from 2005, I see several people that are no longer an active part of our church, and recognize new faces that have stepped into various positions. I also notice different programs that aren't the same today as they were only 10 years ago. My church has changed. I'm sure every church has changed over the last 10 years.

So the question is, can I be steadfast if I am not the same as I was? Can our churches be steadfast if they aren't the same? Maybe my theme verse, Jeremiah 17:8, which talks of being a tree planted by the waters, implies we

are to be unchanging or immovable. Certainly we must hold true to our core belief in Christ Jesus. But I don't see this verse implying change is bad. I see it as God telling us that things will change — we will change — and we are to stand tall through the changes. When the environment around a tree changes, the tree either adapts or it dies.

God expects us to change. Let me say that again...God expects us to change. In fact, GOD EXPECTS OUR CHURCHES TO CHANGE! Before I cause any civil unrest, let's think about this.

First of all, we shouldn't be changing our fundamental doctrine. Let me get that clarified right up front. But if our churches don't adapt to the times and our surroundings, we become out of place. I have seen churches unwilling to adjust their youth ministry — or unwilling to have a youth ministry — and soon it's impossible to find anyone there under the age of 45. Other churches revamp worship so much that their older members feel marginalized and unwelcomed. Still others fail to recognize the demographics have changed in their neighborhood and miss out on serving the wider community.

As we enter into this New Year, I pray that each church will grow strengthened in its service for the Lord. I also pray that all of us will view the inevitable changes that will come in 2015 as opportunities to grow, not reasons to complain that things are changing. If God is going to provide a chance for our churches to flourish, let's steadfastly step forward in faith and see where God will lead us. As Seventh Day Baptists, I pray this can be our New Year's resolution: we must be steadfast in our commitment to share the message of Christ in an ever-changing world. Why?...because change is good! SR

[See the President's Challenge on page 2!](#)



President's Page by Bill Probasco

Soft pretzels. Shoo Fly Pie. Horse and Buggies. Plain Folk. Dutch Wonderland. Farmer's Markets. Outlet Shopping. And...more shopping! This list is just a short one that comes to mind when thinking about visiting Lancaster County, Pa. But, one activity that is not on that short list, which is a must for the family who loves history and beautiful farmland, is exploring and finding the covered bridges of Lancaster County. There are over two dozen of these historic structures, romantically called "kissing bridges" for all of the couples that have strolled across, scattered throughout the county. So, whether you plan on finding them all...or just want to check out a few...there are five different tours available. Each tour gives turn by turn directions with ideas for sightseeing attractions, food and shopping. (YES, more shopping... more on that in a later issue.) We hope to see you next summer at Conference 2015 in Historic Lancaster County!!

Lititz and its Countryside

A visit to charming north central Lancaster County and the town of Lititz: Gather some travel tips at the PA Dutch Visitors Center and then depart on a journey to four historic covered bridges, meandering through Lititz and the surrounding area. You'll finish up in the town of Lititz itself for a delicious lunch, gallery strolling and lots of sweet and salty treats!

Northern Amish Countryside

Exploring northeast Lancaster County farmland and the town of Ephrata: Begin your journey in Ephrata and travel through Amish countryside, past five historically-preserved covered bridges. You'll journey across back roads, past Amish farms and schools and find many things to do on the way. Enjoy a hearty meal at a popular smorgasbord, stroll around a farmers' market and take a trip through time to learn about a 1700s religious community — with Sabbath roots!!

Southern Amish Countryside

Visit southeastern Lancaster County with its rolling farmland and the towns of Strasburg and Christiana: Begin in Strasburg, travel across the Amish countryside to explore four historic covered bridges, passing Amish one-room schoolhouses and farms. Discover an area that's quiet and relaxing, twisting and turning through back roads that lead to the open landscape. Along your journey, stop in Christiana to learn about its history and the role in the Underground Railroad.

Lancaster Fun for the Whole Family



Historic Rivertowns and Western Villages

Meander through the towns of Columbia and Manheim in western Lancaster County: Travel through the historic towns while exploring five unique covered bridges. Start in Columbia along the Susquehanna River visiting a museum packed with clocks and a farmers' market filled with fresh delicacies. Make a short side trip to soak in the heritage of Marietta, adjacent to the Susquehanna River. Continue on to the Manheim area for more fun by way of a renaissance village and dairy farm tour!

Scenic Parks & Preserves

Explore southern Lancaster County's beautiful landscapes, plus Strasburg and Downtown Lancaster: Starting at the Pennsylvania Dutch Visitors Bureau, explore seven historic covered bridges, all the while journeying through picturesque countryside, past Amish farms and one-room school houses, through the twists and turns of Lancaster County's back roads. Continue into the relaxing backdrop of nature by touring through beautiful woods and natural preserves. Along the trail are plenty of opportunities to stretch your legs. Browse the shops at two large outlet centers filled with name brand items, enjoy dinner and a comedic show, stroll through Strasburg's quaint shops, explore a nature preserve and scenic overlook and enjoy the sites of downtown Lancaster. SR

For more information on the Covered Bridges and the tours available go to: <http://www.padutchcountry.com/activities/pa-covered-bridges.asp>



Christian Education

by Andrew J. Camenga

Can you imagine trees getting up and walking around? (Yes, I know that those of you who have read or seen Tolkien's the Lord of the Rings trilogy, have had the image of walking trees burned into your imagination.) Even if you can imagine it, do you expect to see it happen?

I'm guessing that you don't expect to see it happen. We know that the reality of being rooted precludes moving about under one's own power. We also know that the reality of being able to walk precludes being firmly rooted.

Yet, Paul chooses to put those images together when describing what a Christian life should like:

Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. (Colossians 2:6-7, ESV)

Christians, Walk in Him!

Christians, Be rooted and built up in Him!

This combination of images has captured my attention multiple times as I've contemplated the work of Christian Education. As we live as servants of the living God, we are to simultaneously be rooted and walking, stable and mobile.

For a number of years, the Board of Christian Education worked internally with the phrase *Portable Faith*. It allowed us a short hand way of talking about a constellation of issues we saw as crucial to the mission and vision of BCE's ministry among Seventh Day Baptists. For us, it captured the idea that faith is with us wherever we go. But, when we tried using the phrase outside our walls, we discovered that the phrase could not bear the depth of meaning we were attributing to it. While portable evokes images of things that are lightweight

and easy to bring along, it also conjures thoughts of things that temporary, optional, and disposable.

But, being a Christian is not part-time work. It isn't simply something you wear like a garment for a time before hanging it in the closet. It is something that is always with you — better, it is who you are.

We have died to self and live for Christ.

As we begin to live the reality that this life is not ours, God includes us in His plan to help the world see His love and to help those in the heavenly realms see His wisdom. He makes us into agents of Godly change. God provides a message for us to proclaim (amongst ourselves and to others). God's Spirit brings forth fruit in our lives to demonstrate in our limited way the nature of God in word and deed. We commit ourselves to knowing,



valuing, and doing those things Jesus has called His followers to do — and to helping others do the same thing. We exalt Christ as King and watch for ways to use what God has given to us in ways that please Him.

That reality should stick to us. Our faith in the God who made us to be agents of God’s change should be always visible. It should be seen when we are at home and on the road, at church and in the workplace. It should be seen when we are at play and intensely overloaded with responsibility.

We are called to be rooted in Christ — a reality that we never leave. We are called to walk in Christ — a reality that transforms our activity and choices. Rooted and walking, we are in Christ. Thanks be to God. SR

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION

JANUARY

Youth/Adult

You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you.

– Isaiah 26:3

Junior

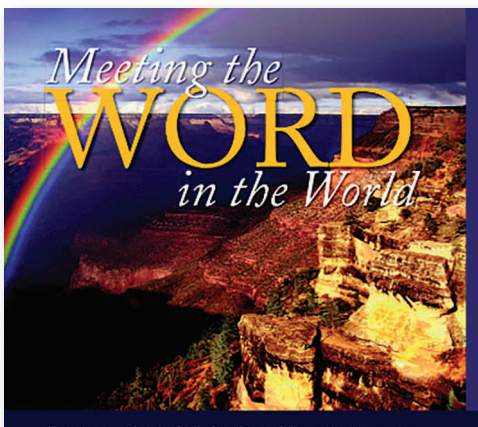
You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you.

– Isaiah 26:3

Primary

Trust in God.

– Isaiah 26:3



Enjoying our place in God’s Creation and discovering that we are a part of “God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

— Ephesians 2:10



Glen W. Warner, an “internationally unknown author,” is a retired SDB pastor.

SCSC Celebrating 50 Years!

Celebrating 50 years in 2015, the Seventh Day Baptist Summer Christian Service Corps is pleased to offer a book of brief meditations by Pastor Glen Warner. You can support this valuable ministry of SCSC by your gift of \$25 and receive this book as a thank you! Every penny will be given to support SCSC 2015.

To order:

Email: glwarner@moldedfiberglass.com

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Ashtabula, OH 44004

Mail your check to Glen Warner payable to "SCSC"

No credit cards

Book shipped day order received.

You may order a quantity for a church fund raising project for SCSC and make payment after all the books are sold.



The Nederlandsche Christelijke Geheelonthouders Bond. (Dutch Christian organisation for abstinence of alcohol).

Gerard Veldhuysen (senior) is the elderly gentleman.

The use of this car: to prevent the use of alcohol, zero tolerance.

Gerard Veldhuysen spoke on many occasions of the risks of alcohol and he then handed out copies of the Boodschapper (The Messenger).

This car must have served the anti-alcohol organisation and the 7th Day Baptists. Translation: the plate on the car left: “Think of the day of Sabbath, and make it holy, the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord your God.” The plate on the car right: “This who praise the lord and will [have been] be baptised will be saint but those who did not believe will be doomed.” Mid text: “Shall we stay in sin, so that mercy will become more? No, that must be far from us!” Under (a slogan): “Where the alcohol trade lessens, the welfare (wellbeing, wellness) grows.” Aside: “God is love. For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

Gerard Veldhuysen, Sr.: **“so mighty a soldier in the army of the Lord”**

— Vilan van de Loo

Big changes often start with one person being curious and asking questions. Gerard Veldhuysen, Sr. (1834-1910) was that person. He was raised in Haarlem as a mainstream Protestant but at one point in his life wondered about the Sabbath. A few years later he founded

the Seventh Day Baptists in the Netherlands, and to this very day the church which he started is still here.

Gerard Veldhuysen was not only a businessman and baker, but also an idealist and optimist as well. He

must have had a strong charisma as he was able to attract loyal followers in his various communities, but he was also at times overly sensitive. He was a modest man, though that did not stop him from publishing a controversial magazine. Judging on his appearances in the contemporary press, he must have been a man full of contradictions.

In 1858 Gerard Veldhuysen founded the 'Vereeniging tot verspreiding van de Waarheid' (Society for Spreading the Truth). This Vereeniging was stable, until in 1869 Veldhuysen traveled to the Baptist church in the town Franeker, Frysland. He quickly realized that this must be the true faith. He was baptized on the spot. In Haarlem friends and followers were baptised, bringing the total to twelve. A magic number. Had not there been twelve disciples? And so, on October 10, 1869, Veldhuysen created the Gemeente van Gedoopte Christenen (Municipality of Baptised Christians). In response, the Vereeniging asked his friends to shun him. They obeyed. Veldhuysen had a mental breakdown that lasted for at least a year. However, his Gemeente did not fail him. Five years later they received royal recognition. Veldhuysen and others had bought a building on the Parklaan that served for the meetings, and he had started to publish a magazine called *De Boodschapper* (*The Messenger*). Then new problems arose.

Support

Veldhuysen received treatises from Scotland and America. One of them brought him once more to a different insight: Saturday, not Sunday, should be the day of rest. On October 13, 1877, Veldhuysen founded the Seventh Day Baptists — this time with twenty members coming from his Gemeente. They gathered in the Parklaan and read *De Boodschapper*, which was the property (and full financial risk) of Veldhuysen. He had finally found a home, even though it would mean enduring conflicts with society, where the Seventh Day Baptists were greeted with very little acceptance.

It is surprising to see the wide range of Veldhuysen's activities in relation to his unknown source of income. *De Boodschapper* had very few advertisements and was often given away to inform others about the Seventh Day Baptists. Veldhuysen supported the Midnight Mission, an anti-prostitution movement focusing on men. For twenty years he was the beloved chairman of

the Christelijke Geheelonthouders Bond (Christian Organisation for Abstaining of Alcohol), giving lectures and speeches everywhere in the Netherlands. He also taught Bible lessons in his hometown of Haarlem. Could all this really have been paid for by his bakery?

What we do know is that Veldhuysen was supported by SDBs in America. He was an avid reader of *The Sabbath Recorder* and traveled three times overseas, in 1882, 1890 and 1906. It is likely that the support was not only of a moral but also of a financial nature. Especially around 1900 there was an exchange of church members between America and the Netherlands, almost always with Veldhuysen involved. His youngest son, Pieter (1874-1902), was even consecrated as a missionary in 1901. Pieter died within a few months after arriving in Africa — uniting America and the Netherlands in sadness.

Dungeon

Maybe losing his youngest was too much for Veldhuysen. In the years to follow, *De Boodschapper* mentioned from time to time saddening facts about his declining health, physical as well as mental. Veldhuysen suffered from cancer, had an operation followed by a "clouded mind" (insanity) for over a year and then, as his one remaining son Gerard wrote: "he was relieved from his dark dungeon."

His funeral became somewhat of a national event, with many Christian organisations paying their last respects to this man. Letters from all over the world were received, and, of course, also from America. Professor Dr. William C. Daland, president of Milton College wrote: "We all feel stricken with grief and smitten to the dust at the departure of so mighty a soldier in the army of the Lord. All the brothers and sisters here would join me in expressing the love and veneration we all feel for his memory. He became very dear to every Seventh-day Baptist in America. His last visit, in his old days, brought his distinguished personality very close to all our hearts." SR



Vilan van de Loo is a Dutch independent researcher from the Netherlands. Her interests are history and literature. Her biography of Johannes van der Steur will be published May 2015 (in Dutch). Contact? Mail: vilan@xs4all.nl

Last month I wrote about the changes that our General Conference is undertaking and how those changes have allowed us to renovate what we have been doing in the past and reconfigure them for our future. Our General Council saw the opportunity to explore ways we could renew our ministries in order to revitalize our churches. Through a very prayerful process they examined our existing programs, discussed future ideas, brainstormed and dreamed about the “what ifs.” They sought vision from God of what a more preferable future would look like for our Conference and how this preferable future would impact our churches. Then the Council assigned these responsibilities and duties over to our “players.”

Jeremiah Owen — Director of Communications

Jeremiah brings a new set of skills to an area called “Emerging Media.” Over the past few years we have witnessed the fast paced development of ways to communicate that we did not have only ten years ago. Jeremiah understands these forms of communication. He is always preparing himself for the next big thing to come along in communication. Facebook and Twitter might be the things today...but you only have to wait a short time before the next wave of communication technology is here. Over many years, one of the major undertakings of the Communications department has been to publish the monthly magazine, *The Sabbath Recorder*. Through this print outreach we undertake to inspire and inform Seventh Day Baptists in America and around the world!

Nick Kersten — Director of Education & History

Nick has a passion for teaching! If you have ever been in one of his classes you will soon find that to be evident. Nick also has a sweet spot for History. Just like communications, today’s education methods come in many forms. The SDB Education emphasis is focused on those studying for the ministry through Seminary Education or Bible College to those in the T.I.M.E. Program. It also includes Continuing Education for Pastors. There are programs and materials to encourage and equip Seventh Day Baptist Churches, helping them to teach evangelism, nurture, discipleship, history, and stewardship to their members. Our SDB History reminds us to “Remember our past, to Inform the present, and to Envision the future.” Through our vast history as a people of faith, we will have a

Meet the Directors



Owen



Kersten



Brown



Pethtel

fuller understanding of and appreciation for whence we have come and how and why, under God’s leading in the past. Nick’s teaching skills will allow him more opportunities to inform us all on our rich heritage.

Clint Brown — Director of Missions

Clint became the executive of the Missionary Society in 2011. Clint has brought a new focus and leadership to what Missions is all about today! His work takes him all over the world and sometimes into harsh circumstances. Clint’s quiet demeanor is just the thing to diffuse volatile situations. Spreading the Gospel around the world is the goal of the Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society. The Society carries out their goals through education, information, and suggestions for tangible assistance. These are stepping stones to becoming a beacon to others around the world.

The purpose of the Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society is to coordinate and carry out missions by carrying the message of salvation through faith in Christ to all who will hear, so they may accept Him as Savior.

John Pethtel — Director of Church Development & Pastoral Services

John has just been recently hired to this position. This Director works with Churches, Pastors, and Associations in the capacity of: Church Planting/Revitalization Coordinator; the first contact with new acquaintances and inquiries; Pastoral Services; and Crisis Intervention. John brings a passion to this position that ensures that this overwhelming position has the best chance of completing the goals and values that we desire. John’s management and administrative background, along with his pastoral care and mentoring, and his understanding of how the General Conference works, make him a great placement in this new and exciting Director position. Please help us welcome and support John in his new endeavor, representing and working on all of our behalf. SR



Executive Director
Rob Appel





A life devoted to things
is a dead life, a stump;
a God-shaped life is a
flourishing tree.

—Proverbs 11:28

Photo by Craig M. James Photography

Coming Next Summer:
Seventh Day Baptist Conference 2015
July 26 - August 1
Lancaster Bible College
Lancaster, Pennsylvania



Pethtel Announced as Director of Church Development & Pastoral Services

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Spotlight on Church Planting

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Meet the Directors

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READY FOR A CHANGE?

President Bill Probasco has
a challenge for the churches!

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