Opening Doors of Ministry

There's a zeal in the East

Updates from Mexico and Rwanda
Missionary Society Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the members of the Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society will be held at the Pawcatuck SDB Meeting House, 120 Main St., Westerly, R.I., on Sunday, March 19, 1995, at 2:00 p.m. for the following purposes:

To elect voting members, a Board of Managers and officers to hold office until the next annual meeting and until their successors are elected.

To hear and act upon the reports of the Board of Managers and officers for the fiscal year January 1, 1994 to December 31, 1994.

To ratify the appointment of independent public accountants for the current fiscal year.

The Board of Managers has fixed the close of business on February 28, 1995, as the time at which members entitled to vote thereof shall be determined.

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--- Cindy Nadeau, secretary

Summer Christian Service Corps 1995

Are you...

- 17 and a high school grad? (by June '95)
- a member of a local SDB church?
- wondering what to do this summer?
- wanting to serve God?
- or...
- a church member wanting an SCSC team?
- a church looking for a camp staff?

Summer Christian Service Corps can answer your questions. You can serve God and get acquainted with some of our fantastic youth. You will also see what it's like to commit yourself to a challenging experience.

For applications, write to:
Jan Bond, P.O. Box 94, Shiloh NJ 08353
Ph. (609) 451-7451

Worker training: June 16-25
Director training: June 15-19
Project dates: June 26—July 31

Application Deadline: March 1, 1995

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by Russell Johnson

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Who are Seventh Day Baptists?

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

- the saving love of Jesus Christ
- the Bible as the inspired word of God and a record of God's will for man. The Bible is our authority both for our faith and our daily conduct.
- freedom of thought under the guidance of the Holy Spirit
- the congregational form of church government. Every member of the church 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 (Sunday) 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 Christ.

It is the joy of the Baptist that makes Seventh Day Baptists just a little bit different. If you would like more information, write: Seventh Day Baptist Center, 3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678. Phone (608) 752-5055; FAX (608) 752-7711

--- Kirk Looper, RuthAnne Peil, Don A. Sanford.

Kevin Butler
Editor

Leanne Lippincott
Assistant Editor

Contributing Editors

Calvin P. Babcock, Ernest K. Bee Jr., Charlotte Chroniger, Myrna L. Cox, Rodney L. Henry, G. Kirk Looper, RuthAnne Peil, Don A. Sanford.

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

by Russell Johnson

How can Seventh Day Baptists open doors to reach more people during this changing of the centuries? Where will we discover the most fruitfulness for Christ’s Kingdom?

The gap is widening between the values of secular North Americans and God’s children. This comes from a society that accepts no moral absolutes, and “each man doing what seems right in his own eyes.” God’s wisdom and clear moral standards have been rejected by much of our society. Conventional wisdom discounts Christian faith as archaic and “unenlightened.”

Although some speak about a need for integrity and values in our society, most would not turn to Christ to establish such a foundation. Still, the thoughtful observer will notice that under the veneer of self-assurance, many people have a deep and nagging concern about current and future trends. The natural man doesn’t discern the problems of our society to be a consequence of ignoring God’s commandments and precepts.

How can Christians make a difference in these times? What is the best way to minister the truth of Christ to unsaved people?

Asking three basic questions will shape a church’s vision and plan for winning the lost:

• Who in our community needs to hear what Jesus has done for them?
• Would they listen to us based on their personal experience of our loving them?
• How can we change their mistrust into a desire to hear?

The answers will be found not in adopting some new program, but in perceiving the age-old human need for true friendships. The quantity, quality, and durability of sincere relationships that believers initiate with the unchurched will determine the number of people touched.

For several years, church growth writers have told us that the most effective method for winning people to Christ comes through the invitation of a friend. Materials geared to help churches grow continue to indicate enjoyable human contact as the best tool for God’s people. The “salt” and “light” resulting from the love of God at work in the believer becomes an effective witness in a good relationship.

People are still seeking real, enduring friendships with no price tags attached. Because of this, many are going with cults that show concern for them. Prior contacts with those called “Christians” may have given the impression of a greater concern for advancing the institution—the church—than concern for people as individuals.

People today are not always looking for ideas about their problems; they are looking for the real answers that God has given to life issues. But they need to see those answers in us. Only in this kind of friendship will they understand the reality of “therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Cor. 5:17 KJV).

Jesus clearly set a pattern for His disciples. His pattern of outreach to sinners was not a methodology, but a touching of hurting lives with love and truth. The religious leaders of His time viewed Jesus with scorn as a friend of sinners and publicans.

This much-needed restoration of the Great Commission once again sends His servants to where the sinner is found. Jesus never intended for His workers to wait at the church to receive those He wanted to save. The desire to release people from sin is magnified by firsthand knowledge of those being torn and ravaged by sin.

The child of God realizes that these sinners cannot deliver themselves from the power of sin. They need willing messengers of Christ’s mercy combined with the powerful presence and conviction of the Holy Spirit. They need to hear the message of Good News shared in a combination of personal experience and the truth of God’s Word.

Does your church plan to increase its witness for the Kingdom?

Russell Johnson is National Extension Minister for the Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society.

Materials geared to help churches grow continue to indicate enjoyable human contact as the best tool for God’s people.

You should set priorities to seek both new and deeper trust relationships with those who are not yet Christians. You should invest as much time actively working with sinners as you do in fellowship with believers. Transferring members from other Christian groups should never be mistaken for evangelism. It is also important to remember that God’s Sabbath is only a part of the Seventh Day Baptist responsibility to testify. We are to share the full message of Jesus: a message that transforms life.

The Bible states, “By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another,” (John 13:35). Where North Americans feel wanted and loved, they will be present. The power of God’s genuine love needs to be unleashed as a major outreach tool of the church. We need to expand the circle of sharing far beyond the fellowship of believers into the hurting world around us.

If your church will provide unchurched individuals and families with relationships of genuine caring, you will see the blessing of new souls won and transformed for Christ.

January 1995/5
There’s a zeal in the East
by Russell Johnson

The apostle Paul ministered with this kind of zeal to start churches in every possible community. His passion for the Gospel of his Messiah moved him to start churches in more communities than would seem humanly possible within one lifetime. Perhaps the key is revealed in those words, “humanly possible.” He had learned to trust God for what he would accomplish. Some might call Paul an overservicer, or too religious. He simply lived with a commitment that still puts fire in our hearts: the urgency to share everyone the message of deliverance over the power of sin.

New believers, who have personally experienced release from the power of sin or skepticism, have a “first love” conviction that the Lord will do anything necessary to advance His Kingdom through their lives. Like little children, positive attitude and absence of fear provide foundations for their attempts to do things for God.

How much zeal for His vision does God see in me? What am I willing to do, and what am I willing to give up to see a new church started to honor God? Would I give up a year of attending my local church to be part of a team of couples to start a new SDB church in a nearby city?

How many of God’s people have sufficient zeal for Him to use a year of accumulated vacation time to give themselves to starting a church for the Lord? Some people might mortgage their future to acquire a new house, a new room, a new car, or some other thing for the family. But would they mortgage their time and resources to commit a year to start a new church in their area?

Zeal is reflected in different ways in different believers, but it is the essential description of what motivates them.

Nova Scotia, Canada
Living in Springhill, Nova Scotia, Gary and Gayle Meagher quietly serve God with this kind of willing spirit. Their goal is to start a church in that eastern Canadian province.

Gary has a living and salary set aside so that he will be able to take a whole year off in 1996. He wants to take some time for the two of them, and then to use the majority of the year for a concentrated work in starting a church in the thriving capital city of Halifax.

During the past two years, Gary has sought contacts through ads and letters. Using his experience as a Baptist deacon, he has approached Baptist pastors all across the Nova Scotia area, seeking any who might be convicted of the Sabbath truth.

Satan has no love for such concentrated efforts for the Lord. We ask Seventh Day Baptist to be in prayer that Gary and Gayle experience shielding from all evil as they prepare for this work. Their commitment is a “first love” zeal for the work of God. The Verona, N.Y., SDB Church members have been moved by God to be prayer partners and to take a special supportive interest in this couple.

Portsmouth, Va.
King David once declared, “zeal for your house consumes me” (Psalm 69:9). This man of God had a zeal for the activities of God.

When the 50 or so people from the local community of Craddock attend the Abundant Life SDB Church (Portsmouth, Va.), each Sabbath, this kind of love is very evident. They want to praise God and learn from His Word. Visitors from other SDB churches remark about the simplicity and sincerity of this group’s time of sharing and worship.

As Paul said about the Corinthians, there are few financially well-to-do among those of the Portsmouth church. However, God has recently provided this group with three separate buildings: one to distribute food to those who are in need; one to provide a ministry center for youth, church offices, director’s housing, and worship; and another to house those recovering from sin’s addictions.

How much zeal for His vision does God see in me?

Craddock, in Portsmouth, has a pleasant oval-shaped park surrounded by a street which is lined with shops. The food distribution center has been moved from the pastor’s home to a rented building formerly used as an oriental food restaurant. The ministry center is located just a short distance around the oval in a two-story brick building first used as a bank and then as administrative offices for a small grocery chain.

Both the ministry center and recovery house were purchased through the grace of God at a small fraction of their market value. The owner of two townhouses, upon learning of their envisioned use, offered them to the church for a quarter of their assessed market value. These homes were immediately put to use. They provided housing for those who had accepted Christ and needed a place to recover from sin’s destructive power and rebuild their lives in Christ. The YMCA board, which had previously received the main ministry building as a donation, requested that the church make an offer. It was immediately approved, and low-interest financing was arranged through the bank of one of the YMCA board members. The people of Abundant Life have been enthusiastically at work converting the building to its future ministry functions.

Buildings can be useful, and may be a part of God’s provision, but these physical locations are ineffective unless life-changing, Holy Spirit empowered ministry is at the core of what happens. When the Spirit stirs the hearts of God’s people to exhibit genuine compassion for the lost, the power of Christ comes to bear most fully on those who are alienated from Him. In the presence of such zeal for His work, He seems most evident to provide for all His people’s needs. Abundant Life’s people are committed to work together to do the menial tasks of operating a church organization, seek opportunities to nurture people by study of the Word, and routinely share the Gospel to those in need of redemption. Most of them experienced the devastation of sin, and are now determined to help those who are still in crisis with the same grace they received in Jesus.

This past summer, the church sponsored two teen-age evangelistic teams. During the first month, the teens journeyed through the southeastern United States, going out wherever they went. In the second month, they returned to do work in the Portsmouth area. The fruits of their local labor had 450 people attending the community fair in the town square, and new families have begun to regularly attend and work with the church.

A full-time evangelistic couple is expecting to join the work in early 1995. The church is enthused about the possibilities for increased ministry building as a donation, re-quested that the church make an offer. It was immediately approved, and low-interest financing was arranged through the bank of one of the YMCA board members. The people of Abundant Life have been enthusiastically at work converting the building to its future ministry functions.

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Blountville, Tenn.

Zeal is not only identified by vision and enthusiastic effort; it is marked by persistent endurance when things don’t happen quickly or easily. After a time of struggle and endurance, the vision of a pastor and wife, the hopes of local people, and the prayers of believers across the nation are being fulfilled. Shepherd’s Fold Ministries, Blountville, Tenn., is now legally organized with 19 charter members.

Out of what might have been seen as a struggle against all kinds of insurmountable difficulties, God has resurrected hope, love, and new energy needs to be channeled and converted into directed effort toward a specific purpose.

Our God is a God of the impossible and improbable in the eyes of the world. He does not act to impress or amaze us. He does not act to impress a nation, but has raised up a worshiping body that has reached attendance in the 40s at recent special meetings.

The ministry of this group is modeled around the character of Paul’s words to the church at Rome: “Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves; never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position” (Romans 12:10-16).

West Palm Beach—Seven Day Street Baptist Church has had this directed zeal. They chose to honor God by doing more than they had been doing it with excellence. Building on their tutorial program for struggling junior and senior high school students, and a community outreach effort designed to let residents know of the church’s ministry, the group developed a special outreach to youth. This summer program, conducted at the end of July, reached only a small area of the neighboring community due to staff limitations.

Thirty young people within two age groups were sought to attend a club built around developing community and family values. However, the word still spread, and 50 young people registered before the six days were completed, and others still asked about joining. Twenty young people made decisions for the church, which had been organized only three years ago. Those who seek finds. Those who knock have the door opened. Those who ask find their request granted.

The lasting results in each church, old or new, are proportional to their level of zeal for the one and only Redeemer in each believer’s heart. In the Christian Church in Tennesse, there is a daily record of people being led to Christ by members of the church. In the neighboring church, the momentum is also seen in sincerely devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, the breaking of bread and prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."

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Low qualifications:
1) He must be a man of faith.
2) He must be well-grounded in Scripture.
3) He must be willing to do whatever needs to be done.
4) He must be able to do what needs to be done.
5) He must be able to do what needs to be done.

A special “thank you” goes to our translator, Patty Petersen. She temporarily put aside her responsibilities of home and family to take this trip, and dedicated her time to the Lord’s work.

1) He must be a man of faith.
2) He must speak Spanish, at least “conversationally.” (He would not be required to preach, but he would be trained to teach.)
3) He must speak English.
4) He must have a “buena disposition.” (Someone who is self under the authority of leaders without wanting to “take over.”)

Publications
Money is needed for a songbook which is being prepared for publication. This would be a “revolving” fund. (Money would be withdrawn to pay for the books, and income from sales would replenish the fund.)

Kevin Butler, editor of The Sabbath Recorder, was able to transfer the Recorder from the Macintosh to a DOS-format program. He sent Rosalio a copy, and it has been translated into Spanish. This will allow Rosalio to share the Recorder with non-English speaking Mexicans. (Thank you, Rev. Butler.)

The SDB Missionary Society has sent a translation program to help Rosalio write letters and other documents in English. We are excited about this possibility of communicating in English.

Other needs
Some of the needs of individual churches in Mexico are as follows:

- Brother Joel (age 77) plays a one-octave accordion at church. It is in poor condition and needs to be replaced.
- The church roof in Poza Rica needs rebuilding.
- Young people who are studying to be future church leaders need money for bus fare so they can attend classes.
- We enjoyed our Mexican visit, we left with a touch of sadness. We would miss the hospitality and graciousness shown us during our stay.
- It is hoped that others from our U.S. and Canada Conference will be able to visit Mexico. Just be sure to let them know that you are coming, so they can plan for your visit. You should allow about six weeks for correspondence. (You can also FAX your messages to Pastor Camacho, if you phone him ahead of time.)
- We are praying for the growth of the churches in Mexico, and that they will overcome the resulting “growing pains.” We encourage you to pray for them also.

A future for orphans and refugees in Rwanda

Over the past several months, Elie Nduwayesu, a Rwandan pastor, has been requesting information about Seventh Day Baptists. He wanted to know what one had to do to become an SDB, and how to fellowship with other SDBs.

It was easy for me to send him the information he requested, and to explain how he could become a Seventh Day Baptist. I also told him how he could organize the churches he serves into a Conference in Rwanda.

While communicating with Pastor Nduwayesu, I discovered that he is ministering to the Rwandan refugees in Uganda, not in the churches in Rwanda. But that makes little difference to him. He merely wants to affiliate with a denomination that is not already established in Rwanda. Apparently, the religious groups already established in Rwanda have taken sides in the civil war, so the people are not safe in the churches. Pastor Nduwayesu believes that an entirely “new” denominational affiliation will provide a fresh start.

Between September 1993 and April 1994, he organized many small SDB groups in the Ugandan refugee camps. In the spring of ’94, he was allowed to enter Rwanda, and began organizing groups in the refugee camps there.

Pastor Nduwayesu took a census in three districts of the people left in his church groups in three districts. Figures for some of the refugee camps are listed below.

In the Cyamutara camp, he discovered that 20 widows were caring for 1,760 children, one to two years of age.

Pastor Nduwayesu would like to establish “orphan villages”-settlements housing about 300 orphans, plus foster mothers to care for them. Several villages abandoned during the civil war have already been given for this purpose. Needed items include mattresses, blankets, cups, plates, jerry cans (to carry water), wash basins, and soap. This plan calls for a one-time cost of $45,200, plus a working budget of $45,000 annually. Pastor Nduwayesu has asked if the SDB Missionary Society could possibly help with any of this cost.

However, before he can do any of this work, the new SDB group in Rwanda needs to be registered, at a cost of $1,000. In addition to registration, the group is required to have a headquarters, which rents for $1,200. A copy machine is also needed, plus a computer or typewriter ($5,000). And since electricity is limited or practically nonexistent in Rwanda, a generator would be very handy.

We here at the Missionary Society realize that this entire project involves a large amount of money. However, maybe some of these items can be supplied by our local churches. We believe that the refugees remaining in Rwanda, and those returning to their homes from Uganda, are going to need all the help we can give. If you have used clothing, blankets, food (nonperishable), Bibles (French preferred), and cups or glasses (plastic), they can be sent to:

Seventh Day Baptist Church/Rwanda
% Lutheran World Federation/Uganda
 Pastor Elie Nduwayesu
 Kampaign, Uganda

Since Rwanda is in the process of reorganizing, Pastor Nduwayesu would like to get the denomination registered. Registration will be more difficult after the reorganization is completed.

The work in Rwanda is not going to be easy, and those left behind are going to have a big clean-up job. Referring to the orphans in a June 20 letter last year, Pastor Nduwayesu wrote, “We found horror, hopeless people in need, and many orphan children. Most of them have been physically affected; some have no arms, no legs, no hands, no feet, or have only one of them. It is terrible.”

<table>
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<th>Camp Name</th>
<th>Children (1-10 yrs.)</th>
<th>Older People (55+)</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Kirumurugi</td>
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January 1995/ 11
Revival in Zambia, new fence in Malawi by Kirk Looper

Zambia
The Conference of Seventh Day Baptists in Zambia is coming along very well. They had their annual meeting in August and were quite surprised when over 5,000 showed up. Planning for only half that number, they were really caught at a loss. They had to find food and items for all the extra people. Even though this was a blessing, the added bodies also presented a financial problem.

Out of the 5,000 who came, 1,300 accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and hundreds rededicated their lives to the Lord. Praise God for His blessings and calling!

Several women at the conference were uniforms designed for their ladies organization. The uniforms were made from cloth donated from Mr. and Mrs. D.K. Elsey, Devon, England. The women are very personal who came, accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior and hundreds rededicated their lives to the Lord. Praise God for His blessings and calling!

“...and Jesus was going about all the cities and villages, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom...” (Matthew 9:35 NASB).

Jesus spent much of His time ministering to the people in the cities and villages of Israel, meeting their needs and declaring God’s love for them.

It’s exciting to hear about what some of our SDB churches are doing to reach out to their local mission field and be a light and a witness for the Lord and for Seventh Day Baptists. Maybe some of these activities will give your church some new ideas for ministry in your city, town, or area.

Alfred Station, NY
The Alfred Station, N.Y., SDB Church recently hosted a Homecoming Weekend. Besides a special worship service on Sabbath morning, a Homecoming Fair was held on the following Sunday. The SDB video was shown every hour; SDB books, totebags, and pins were sold and tracts distributed; and food items and crafts were sold. The church’s Chime Choir performed for those in attendance.

Alfred Station also sees Vacation Bible School as a community outreach. By having the closing program on Sabbath morning, they were blessed with 144 in attendance, including many community families.

The church has used local newspapers and cable TV stations to advertise the ministries the church has available to the community. As people become more aware of the Seventh Day Baptist presence in their town and its positive influence, the church has a greater chance and responsibility to reach out to those people.

North Loup, NE
The North Loup SDBs also provide a Community Christmas Eve service, and they help with community dinners. The camping program in the summer is a major outreach to non-SDBs and non-Christians.

San Diego, CA
The San Diego, Calif., SDB Church has used sports programs as an outreach to their community, and have encouraged home Bible fellowships. They have had a ministry to the destitute and were involved in the “Reclaim the City” monthly prayer ministries.

Hebron, PA
The Hebron, Pa., SDB Church’s Outreach Committee pays for Christian magazine subscriptions for several young people. The committee also edits and publishes a monthly newsletter.

These are only some of the ways that we as Christians can reach out to our communities, and be a positive witness to the people. As we let others know that we really care, we will be able to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with them. Would your church or women’s group be able to develop any of these ministries for your area? How is your church fulfilling its mission outreach goals?
Pears from the Past by Don A. Sanford, historian

Little mission on the prairie

where three states clasp hands be­
side the Father of Waters. South­
west from Kansas City, till we
reach the fruit laden, flower decked
town of Hammond in Louisiana, or
farther west and south to Fort
Lavaca, Texas, we find isolated
ones who love God’s Sabbath.”

Her descriptions of such places as
Gentry and Little Prairie (or
Nady) in Arkansas are very graph­
ic. She described the church at
Little Prairie as being typical:
“it is set up on posts, having
no basement or underpinning
such as is familiar to us. The
open space beneath gives free
access to the hogs that roam
through the woodland, and their
grunting often forms an accou­
trement to the voice of the
preacher, and sometimes suc­cessfully vies with him in claim­
ing the attention of the congrega­
tion. Following one such occa­
sion, our missionary gathered
some stray boards and other ma­terial and enclosed the space be­
neath the building so effectual­ly
that the disappointed grunts of
his unwelcome visitors that
evening gave him the keenest
satisfaction.”

Much of Rev. T.J. Van Horn’s
work during his missionary tour
was in areas where there were no
churches. Herrick thus records one
summer’s activity in Oklahoma:

There came a summer day when
the missionary, restless to be at
his Master from Kansas, declared that
he meant to go exploring. “They tell
me,” said he, “that one can travel
straight west into Oklahoma for
sixty miles without seeing a church
house. I mean to hike until the
Holy Spirit tells me to stop. Surely
there is some place there where I
can carry the Gospel.”

So he started out on a July
morning and walked all day. He
found wide prairies, green with tas­
seled corn and waving grain; deep
woods threaded with Indian trails
that led to lonely cabins or isolated
farm houses; an occasional school
house in some wayside grove. But
not a church.

And as he called at homes and
asked the question that lay upon
his heart, repeatedly the answer
came, respectfully, but sadly:
“No, we are not Christians here.”
At only three dwellings that long
summer day did he find the answer
he sought.

“Yes,” many of them said. They
would “like to have meetings.”

“Yes,” they would come if he
would “wait till the haying was
done.”

And so began the work, intermit­
tent, slow in gaining the confidence
of the people, but persisted in,
against the odds of heat and dust
and distance and bad roads and a
calculus indirection that was diffi­
cult to overcome.

Gradually, suspicion gave way
before a persistent friendliness.
The people were all occupied, pal­
ets were made on the floor of the
teacher’s platform for the other
small sleepers. I have seen nine ba­
bies sleep on the floor, a distance
beyond the Bible stand, scarcely standing
room left for the preacher, and a
cat walking down the aisle.

One evening three dogs threat­
ened to break up the meeting, but
they were turned out after an exci­t­ing struggle, and peace settled at
once. The people do not mind such
things; they are used to it.

I remember one Sunday, Mr.
Van Horn had no meetings. He
read from the text. “What then will you do
with Jesus who is called the Christ?”

How anxious I was that they
should get that earnest message.

You can fancy my own dismay
when three small maidens com­
cenced to march around the room,
across in front of the platform,
up behind the preacher, down
the other aisle and so around in happy
single file, oblivious to everything
but their own play. Another infant
found a broken desk and pumped it
up and down with huge delight and
most unseemly racket.

More and more nervous I grew
so as my northern notions con­
vinced me that the disappointed grunts
of the disappointed grunts
would tumble into a rubbish heap
at the first blast of discour­
agement.

But that mother was a Christian,
and as she bent with streaming
eyes over the dear baby face, she
cried, “O my darling, it is so hard
to give you up. But I will meet you
in heaven.” Very reverently the
little grave was dug down close
to the edge of the dark forest, while
strong men wept and women sob­
ed and little children looked on
with strained, curious faces.

Yes, those homes without Christ!

One of our brightest, sweetest pu­
pis was a 12-year-old girl whose
mother was of Indian blood and
whose father was in the peniten­
tiary for holding up the law.

And the little children! Must
they grow up, knowing nothing of
the mighty Name except as it was
spoken in oaths? Those mothers—
could they bring up those darling
children aright, where in their own
hearts they did not know the Sav­
vour? We felt as if we could not
have but aching hearts.

As Harriet Van Horn continued
her account, she recorded some of
the success that she and T.J. had
on that field, yet expressed the con­
tinued need for more workers in
the mission fields. She do not say
they are the prevailing winds.

She summarized the Great
Southwest as one big mission field
stretching from “rice on the wind­
swep't prairies of western Okla­
oma to lovely Memphis, sitting

As a part of the Women’s Board
program at Conference in 1920,
Mrs. T.J. (Harriet) Van Horn pre­
sented a stereopticon slide presen­
tation entitled, “Prose and Poetry
of the Home Missionary’s Work
After giving a call to awaken the
missionary spirit among members of
the denomination, and the call
for workers to enter the field, she
spoke of the “Romance of Missions.”

To many who read the thrill­ing
stories of mission work in distant
places, there is a halo of romance
about the subject that is alluring.
Of course, it is the unusual and striking incidents
which occur occasionally in the
life of a missionary that make
good reading in a book or maga­
zine. In a half-hour’s talk, one
could perhaps recount all the re­
ally picturesque happenings of
four years of arduous toil. I re­
member that Susie Burdick once
said to me, “I am sure missionary
work is mere drudgery.
I do not want to mislead any
youthful hearers and build up a
chamberg house of cards which
will tumble into a rubbish heap
at the first blast of discour­
agement and disappointment.
Such winds blow frequently across
the mission fields. I do not say
they are the prevailing winds.

January 1995/ 15
Getting in S.H.A.P.E. at Conference

by Erin Burdick

What do you get when you put 26 young adults, Pastor Andy Samuels, Pastor Steve and Angie Osborn, and Dan Richards together and let them loose on a college campus for five days? A little bit of mayhem, a good deal of fun, and a whole lot of learning! We started off Pre-Con '94 in Lindborg, Kan., with a whiz-bang orientation of the week's theme, "Learning your S.H.A.P.E." Centering around your Spiritual gifts, Heart (or passion), Abilities, Personality, and Experiences, Pastor Andy directed us to learn what God created each of us for and then to do it. Two classes a day, as well as a personality test and a spiritual gifts test, helped each of us round out our S.H.A.P.E. by the end of the week. Our daily schedule also included arm liftin', heart pumpin', praise and Bible quotin', Scripture studyin', worship times, swimming pool trips; and an invigorating Open Forum where we could ask about anything we wanted to know (including something about how to change the oil in a car...). By Sabbath night we were ready and raring to go, and—in the cautious excitement of the moment—let ourselves be talked into a soccer game by Pastor Andy. After two sweating, grunting, and sometimes vicious hours, most of us limped off the court only to wake up the next morning with bruises, and aching bodies (but mind you—only one black eye!).

Sooner or later, however, Sunday morning had to come (along with the bruises), and Pre-Con had to end for another year. This time, though, we had our S.H.A.P.E.s to hold onto and God's plan for us to follow.

Attention youth!
I realize that it has only been a short while since Conference in Kansas and that the memories are still fresh in our hearts and our minds. But it is that time of year again—time to start planning the youth activities for Conference '95.
The officers of the National YF have already been to Buckhannon, W.Va., to check out the town and campus. I am proud to report that we are all very pleased with what we saw. No definite plans have been made, but we are looking into: bowling, skating, miniature golf, and the 4th annual Pastors vs. Youth Basketball Game (Go Youth!!) to name a few.
The only bad thing is that none of these activities are free, so please encourage your YF raisers to help support these activities. We are all expecting a fun week and, with your support, we can make it happen. Please send any donations or suggestions to Matthew Callie, 74 Carolina Ave., Salem, WV 26426.
Thanks again!

Love through Christ,
Cathy Rogers
National YF President

Your Young Adult Interest Committee

We're a Conference committee that has been designed to meet the needs of the growing young-adult population in our Seventh Day Baptist churches. Although we operate as a Conference committee, we are also here during the year to meet the needs of the young adults in our churches.

Does the young adult group in your church need a kick-start? Have you found any Bible study or Sabbath School materials that have been particularly effective in building and strengthening your young adult group? Are you interested in what young adults throughout our denomination are doing?

If your answer was "Yes!" to any of these questions, get in touch with someone on this committee or write us using the address below. To make a difference in our denomination, we need to start getting involved!!

If you have concerns, questions, or ideas that can strengthen our relationships with God and each other, we would like to hear from you!

Ready to become a part of an active young adult interest committee?

Write or call us!
c/o Lara Bates
P.O. Box 51783
Riverside, CA 92517
(909) 788-7844

January 1995
The President’s Page

What about missions?
by Myrna Cox

The call of Christ is never a call to “the easy life.” Yet a life of service to Christ has compensations offered by no other life. We can always count on His presence along the way, with His blessing and reward at the end of the way.

During the first two centuries, the Gospel was taken from place to place by traveling evangelists and teachers. Believers customarily took these missionaries into their homes, then gave them provisions for their journey when they left.

Read 3 John 5-11. This Scripture tells us that as we support missions, we are:

1. Doing faithful (v. 5)
2. Doing well (v. 5)
3. Doing right (v. 8)
4. Doing good (v. 11)

Opposition to missions was condemned.
1. Diotrephes opposed missions in three ways:
   - He disregarded their recommendation (v. 9b)
   - He would not receive the missionaries (v. 10b)
   - He would not allow others to support them (v. 10c)
2. Some Christians do not support missions today by not providing for those who do go, and some actively oppose church support of missions.

We can draw comparisons here between “good and evil” and of “being of God or not.” How do you choose to serve?

Do not be one who is said to be opposed to missions. Joyfully serve those close around you and far away in whatever manner you can (love, physical and monetary support, encouragement, etc.) and be filled with an inexpressible joy that comes from knowing and obeying God.

Reach Out to Those in Need

Planning for Conference in wild, wonderful West Virginia

You are cordially invited to come to General Conference August 6-12, 1995, at West Virginia Wesleyan College in Buckhannon, W.Va. Members of the Conference Host Committee (Stanley Allen, chairman) toured the Wesleyan campus with Conference President Myrna Cox and Acting Executive Secretary Calvin Babcock.

The group—representing the youth and church members at large, as well as denominational officials—found the facility to be excellent. The institution’s personnel are cordial and accommodating. Cost factors in connection with holding Conference there are reasonable. So it was decided to recommend that the necessary steps be taken, with the approval of the General Council, to finalize arrangements.

The location is ideally suited for holding our Conference. There is a relatively compact arrangement of buildings on level ground—yes, there is level ground in West Virginia! The campus layout requires a minimal amount of walking from place to place; dormitories, cafeteria, gymnasium, meeting rooms, and chapel/auditorium are all easily accessible.

Buckhannon is centrally located in West Virginia. And West Virginia is centrally located in an area with great potential for relaxing, exciting, or educational activities before and after the business and spiritual experiences of Conference.

—Our nation’s capital, with all of its historic monuments, magnificent governmental buildings, and superb museums, is just “next door” to West Virginia’s eastern panhandle.

—Within easy driving range of Buckhannon are (according to an official state magazine) “seven lakes, eight wildlife management areas, two state parks, a chunk of the Monongahela National Forest, five superb streams for fishing or kayaking, and one world-class white water recreation river.”

But there is much, much more to do and see in West Virginia, whether vacationing extensively or sightseeing leisurely for just an hour or two. Put the dates on your calendar and start planning right away to attend and participate in Conference as part of your joyful service—“...rejoice in a great and glorious joy which words cannot express.” (1 Peter 1:5).

Watch this column from month to month, and the 1995 General Conference Host Committee will provide you with more details about this cordial invitation to come to wild, wonderful West Virginia!

The location is ideally suited for Conference.
Yes, there is level ground in West Virginia!

January 1995/ 19
Marlboro gives thanks by Diane F. Cruzan

On November 12, 1994, the Marlboro SDB Church in Bridgeton, N.J., celebrated its annual Thanksgiving Dinner. This seemed an appropriate time to also dedicate the recently completed addition to our church building.

Although we had discussed the need for new restrooms for many years, the vote to actually build the addition was made in January 1992. We then hired an architect, decided on a final design, dealt with building code requirements, and raised money for the project. The contractors began work on April 13, 1994. The addition includes two new restrooms (one upstairs and one downstairs) and has made our church handicap accessible. Although everyone in the church had a part in making the addition a reality, three individuals were singled out and thanked for their contributions during the dedication service:

- Trustees Randy Dickinson was responsible for the overall project and put many hours into it. His services were greatly appreciated.
- As church moderator, Sharon Davis had continually reminded us of the need to improve or replace the old restrooms. She received a mirror made from parts of a church window which had to be removed for the addition.
- A framed photograph of the finished project was given to Pastor Mel Stephan, thanking him for his enthusiasm for the addition.

Because this was a time of thanksgiving, we also honored Letha Miller for her many years of piano playing for Sabbath School, church services, and special programs, and for her service in many other areas. She was given a bell to add to her collection and a poem written especially for her.

We at Marlboro have much to be thankful for, with the new addition being just one small part. We pray that all we do here is in accordance with God's will and will aid us in serving others.

Sabbatarians Baptists by James M. Dunn

(The following is reprinted with permission from the October 18, 1994, Report from the Capital. James Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, featured Seventh Day Baptists in his "Reflections" editorial.)

Cotton Mather, Puritan divine, called Rhode Island a "cesspool" of religious practice. He wrote that "there never was held such a variety of religions together on so small a spot of ground... everything in the world but Roman Catholics and real Christians."

Sabbatarians Baptists were early among those variegated versions of the faith in Rhode Island. Along with Roger Williams and John Clarke, Samuel and Tacy Hubbard should be known as Baptist founders. They brought out Seventh Day Baptists.

The term "Sabbatarians" was used as a derogatory reference. The names "Christian" and "Baptist" were also "dirty words" early in history. You may not have noticed that Seventh Day Baptists are one of the supporting Den A. Sanford, a direct descendant of the Hubbards, should be chosen by the Newport Historical Society to write this important story. Sanford is the historian of the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference.

You will learn more than you ever knew about Seventh Day Baptists reading this beautiful 48-page account of their beginnings. (This issue is available from the SDB Center, PO Box 1875, Janesville, WI 53547. Telephone (608) 765-5055. Cost is $5 postpaid.)

This brand of Baptists is also examined carefully in the September 1994 American Baptist Quarterly. Raymond D. Irwin has carefully crafted "A Study in Schism: Sabbatarian Baptists in England and America, 1655-1772."

Irwin writes, "The old notion that Rhode Island was the original home of 'soul liberty' has never been challenged seriously. Scholars perennially view the founder of the colony, Roger Williams, as a renegade radical who believed that government could not constrain conscience without encouraging hypocrisy. The unconstrained conscience and a hatred for hypocrisy has haunted and energized Seventh Day Baptists from their rocky Rhode Island origins until today.

(This look at their roots is available from: American Baptist Quarterly, P.O. Box 851, Valley Forge, Pa., 19462-0851; $5.00 plus postage.)

These who observe Saturday as the Sabbath have argued that Judaic codes continued in force, particularly the divine dictate demanding observance of the Sabbath. They accuse "first day Baptists" of rejecting basic biblical precepts. Yet in most particulars, members of this smallest of our national Baptist bodies believe and behave like other Baptists.

Seventh Dayers have clung tightly to and ferociously defended their beliefs. They have more experience with persecutions than most believers in the Baptist family. They turn to one another for support, form strong family ties, and take their identity from their formative faith perhaps more than any other Baptist by the name.

They have understood the absolute necessity of the separation of church and state. For their entire history, an indifferent or disinterested or even hostile state has been willing to run roughshod over their religious beliefs. The Baptist Joint Committee has a special place in their affections. I was reminded of this once again as I spent a week at their 1994 Conference in Lindsboro, Ken.

Court cases and friend-of-the-court briefs have been the battleground on which the Baptist Joint Committee has repeatedly fought for the freedom of Sabbatarians to worship as they see fit and not to be punished by law, custom, or culture. We stood with Seventh Day Baptists for full rights, whole hearted, religious liberty. It is none of government's business to appoint the time for worship... never has been. [H]
A long way from Nortonville

Reflections on the life and ministry of Alton Wheeler

by Glen Warner

(Excerpted from Rev. Warner's message at Alton Wheeler's memorial service.)

Alton once told me about plowing a field as a child. Every morning he would say, "That was the last time I was ever going to do that."

He was a man of God, and played the role of the prophet like Jonah till I was miserable times in his life and bring him the continued assurance that God's hand was upon his shoulder.

I like to think of this young man laying up into a very starry night sky on those plains, and seeing the constellation now known as Casseopia, which is described as a slightly irregular "W."

He would call this the "Wheeler W," and I guess he saw it throughout his life. I once pointed out that "Warner" also started with the letter W. So, he discovered it first. It is thrilling to realize that the prophet, the prophet, the Apostle Paul, the Wise Men on the way to Bethlehem, and even the man himself.

After completing high school, Alton went off to Salem (W.Va.) College, where he said he had discovered it first. It is thrilling to realize that the prophet, the prophet, the Apostle Paul, the Wise Men on the way to Bethlehem, and even the man himself.

After completing high school, Alton went off to Salem (W.Va.) College, where he said he had discovered it first. It is thrilling to realize that the prophet, the prophet, the Apostle Paul, the Wise Men on the way to Bethlehem, and even the man himself.

The service was in the form of a marriage ceremony, in which the new pastor was called to God, and the congregation responded with a pledge of fidelity to God and the pastor. Thus began a pastoral ministry that was to touch hundreds of families and thousands of individuals in the area.

This was one of those relationships that seemed made in heaven. Within a year, church attendance doubled. Alton's ministry focused on different special emphases, and the congregation responded strongly.

When the call came to be General Secretary of the denomination (1905), Alton felt torn and that he could not leave a field like River- side so soon. Many prayers were said about this by Alton, Ethel, family, and friends. So it was that he accepted the top leadership position and, not unlike the Apostle Paul, left his beloved congrega?

tions. There were many tears and the sacrifice of praise was offered up broken hearts. But it was God's will, and there was healing and fulfillment.

His correspondence of those days is still exciting to read as he began coping with 800-year-old traditions, policies, furniture and carpeting. He and Ethel picked new colors for the offices on Watchung Avenue in Plainfield, N.J. He finally got approval to move desks and cabinets around, throwing out "that which had been stored for unknown reasons. Headquarters didn't know what had hit it!"

Within months, there emerged "Facing Premiers with Faith," a five year emphasis, a master plan at last, each year dealing with our national strategy on different levels. He paid the price many times over, friends of those times who knew and will testify to. He once said that he felt it would take 20 years of unremitting effort to turn us around. So it could be told of dry bones living again, as faith was reawakened in lives across the nation.

So Alton was busier than ever. He and Ethel, faithful to the denomina-
tion, Dr. Pete May called him our "Dean of Pastors." In the lead-
ership roles he played, he became a pastor to some of the leadership in the church in the 70s. This was a long way from Nortonville, but he always found the Lord to be absolutely sufficient for any and all needs of His followers for the denomination.

After the tears, I found the Wheeler W shining in brilliance there within the Milky Way. I had read that the brightest super nova ever recorded was in the 16th century. That was an explosion of energy with the luminescence of several billion times that of our sun. It had come from the Wheeler W."

"The other day, after Ethel had called to say that Alton had left us, I went out to see what it was like there in Ohio and looked up into the night sky, where the stars were shining as they have for all the millennia, in their eternal brightness. After the tears, I found the Wheeler W shining in brilliance there within the Milky Way. I had read that the brightest super nova ever recorded was in the 16th century. That was an explosion of energy with the luminescence of several billion times that of our sun. It had come from the Wheeler W."

"Do you have that confidence? Do you have that joy? Do you radiate that kind of happiness in your life and in your work? Are you out sharing with others?"

If so, you are, you can say with Charles Fuller, 'You, too, have a parcel of land up there. It's waiting for you. It's all ready, and it will be there when you Go.'"
The spirit of money
by Gary Moore

The U.S. economy continues to shine. In September, the World Economic Forum released its closely watched annual survey called "The World Competitiveness Report." The Wall Street Journal summarized America's competitiveness this way: "The U.S. has replaced Japan as the world's most competitive economy for the first time since 1985. The strength of the U.S. economic recovery, entrepreneurship, and nearly a decade of economic restructuring helped boost the U.S. to its top ranking."

"The U.S. has created 30 million new jobs in 20 years.... By contrast, Europe's unemployment levels have stagnated for 25 years, and prospects for European job markets remain clouded as high labor and production costs lure industry investing to more competitive sites in the U.S. Asia, or Eastern Europe.

"Robert Hormate, vice chairman of the international arm of Goldman Sachs & Co., said the study's numbers are consistent with other benchmarks of U.S. competitive strength, such as productivity and unit labor costs, where there have been recent improvements."

But, of course, that doesn't mean most Americans are happy about the economy. Beneath the headline "They Stubbornly Feel Miserable," the Economist magazine recently confirmed that the recession ended in every area of the country almost two years ago. But it went on to say:

"A recent TIME magazine poll showed (in a finding repeated in a variety of local surveys) that fully 69% do not think the recession has ended in the area where they live. This is to put it mildly, astonishing... the numbers fly squarely in the face of this."

I'm reminded that wise old Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 5:10, "Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income" (NIV). SR


Dear SR:
An article last year by Pastor Bernie Wethington, "We Have Something to Say," made me think of a different title from my own life: "You Never Know Who You Invite to Attend Your Church." I have tried to encourage friends to attend through the years, with the possibility of losing them after they came. So, one day when I ran into a friend who had worked with me, I wasn't prepared for his enthusiasm when he asked where I went to church. He asked me many questions, always smiling. I encouraged him by saying that he knew someone else—a very good friend—who also worked with him. I wasn't sure if he knew me, so I had two friends to sit with when he came.

He came and did not leave. However, I never knew where he formerly went to church, except he said he was a Baptist.

One day, he spoke of his faith at the front of the church, from the pulpit. He had been called as an SDB in a church out West!! When he died, he left a large sum of money to our church.

E. Helen Van Valkenburg
Battle Creek, MI

I don't know if He (God) wants everybody to be a Sabbathkeeper."

As a matter of fact, God does want everybody to be a Sabbathkeeper. It is part of His expressed will for all people. Do we not understand the Ten Commandments to be the defining statement of God's will and purpose for His people? In giving the Decalogue, He is telling us, "This is how I want you to live." (And not just the Jews; these laws are intended for all believers. Not for salvation, but for holy living.)

So we cannot agree with the notion that God may not want everyone to be Sabbathkeepers. By the same thinking, we might posit, "I'm not sure God wants everybody to have no other gods before me," or "I don't know if God wants everybody to 'make no graven images.'"

Indeed, as Pastor King affirms, God wants all not to perish. But let us also certainly affirm that He wants all who are saved to come to obey Him. That includes obedience to the Sabbath command.

Larry Graffius
Lost Creek, WV

January 1995/25
K E V I N ’ S  K O R N E R

This time around, I didn’t wait until the new year to try to lose some weight. My extra poundage had really been on my mind (and mid-section) so I renewed my determination to shed the excess baggage.

I’ve kept careful record of my food intake, made more nutritious choices, started exercising regularly, and the pounds and inches are coming off! Now, to maintain.

As I approached this SR, I wondered how I could relate this personal project to missions. Well, this weight loss has been my “mission” for the last couple of months. Like missions, it takes discipline, determination, training, and a heavy (sorry) dependence on the Lord.

I had a certain goal to reach, used proven methods developed by earlier “pioneers,” had to learn a new language (reading nutrition labels on foods)... This is kind of stretching it, huh? Maybe I could share about a missionary who visited our church in November. We held the usual fat-laden donut and coffee hour afterwards, where he declared that he would not be eating. (I didn’t eat a donut either, but for purely personal gain—or, loss.)

“I eat only one meal a day,” the missionary declared, “so I may identify with the starving people in Haiti!” This gets closer to the mission theme, doesn’t it?

“All right,” I figured, “I’ll check a book of illustrations.” My lighter frame was tempted to jump up and down as the very first item I found on missions was this: “Fat in the 1995/27

ers of fat that spread apart as I open up the body. Those cells insulate against cold, provide protection for the valuable organs underneath, and give a firm, healthy appearance to the whole body.”

I had never thought of fat quite like that. “But those are just side benefits,” he continues. “The real value of fat is as a storehouse. Locked in those fat cells are the treasures of the human body. When I run or work or expend any energy, fat cells make that possible. They act as banker cells. It’s absolutely beautiful to observe the cooperation among those cells!”

Dr. Brand then applies the analogy of fat to the body of Christ. Each individual Christian in a relatively wealthy country like America is called to be a “fat cell.” America has a treasure house of wealth and spiritual resources. The challenge to us, as Christians, is to wisely use those resources for the rest of the body. Ever since talking to Dr. Brand, I have taken sort of a whimsical pleasure once each month in thinking of myself as a fat cell—on the day I write checks for Christian organizations. It has helped my attitude. No longer do I concentrate on how I could have used that money I am giving away; rather, I contemplate my privilege to funnel those resources back into Christ’s body to help accomplish his work all around the world.

This story almost makes me sorry for losing so much of my “absolutely gorgeous” surplus. But for too long I had seen myself as a “fat cell”—only in the physical sense. I am quite willing, yet unable, to send some extra “lush layer” of fat to those less-endowed. But I am often able, yet unwilling, to share when it comes to financial fat.

This year will be different. As I trim the physical fat and become more disciplined in that area, couldn’t I transfer some of that will power and determination to my finances and time? The money I save on junk food and going out to eat would surely be welcomed by many more.

Could any of us relatively wealthy Americans do the same?
You can touch the world! Here is a special opportunity to help Baptists around the world through the Baptist World Alliance.

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