Christmas Memories

The Sabbath Recorder

News for and about Seventh Day Baptists

December 1996
Robe of Achievement

The Women's Society is accepting nominations for the Robe of Achievement for 1997. Please be considering a woman in your church who meets these criteria for nomination:

- Must be a committed Christian
- Must be active member of a local Seventh Day Baptist church
- Was/is active as a volunteer in some phase of denominational effort
- Has shown evidence of special service with her family and/or community

A complete résumé must be submitted containing a life history including her achievements and activities. Without a résumé in hand, the committee cannot make a competent choice among many nominees. If an individual has been nominated before, and you still want that person considered, please re-submit the name as well as the résumé.

Send all nominations to:
Elizabeth Bidwell, P.O. Box 136, Shiloh, NJ 08353
Deadline: March 31, 1997

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Summer Christian Service Corps
New application deadline for churches and workers: February 1
Call Charlotte Chroniger at (609) 455-5488

BUY A BOLO - HELP THE SR
Get yourself a "Fitz Original Bolo." Retired minister Elmo Fitz Randolph's handcrafted bolo ties are on sale! Pastor Randy will send you a lovingly made bolo tie for only $50 (last year's price was $40)—and from each purchase, he will still give $20 toward The Sabbath Recorder.

Elmo Fitz Randolph
773 Sky Trail
Boulder CO 80302
(303) 443-3849

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The Sabbath Recorder

Features

The incarnation from a doctor's perspective by Dr. Victor Burdick
Quarantined! by Bob Spreadborough
Early morning serenades by Doris Road
The day after Christmas by Pastor Jim Galanaugh
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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:
- 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 (Saturday) as God's holy day as an act of obedience—not as a means of salvation. Salvation is the free gift of God through Jesus Christ.

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

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Bolos on Sale!

Handcrafted bolo ties are on sale! Oma Seager of Little Rock, Ark., was inadvertently omitted from the list of people who completed the 1996 Scripture Memorization Program. Oma continues to lead the way in this program, sponsored by the SDB Board of Christian Education. Oma is 90 years young.

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Don't forget Oma!

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Elmo Fitz Randolph
773 Sky Trail
Boulder CO 80302
(303) 443-3849

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Statement

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Supporting Organizations

The Sabbath Recorder, 3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678

This is the 152nd year of publication for The Sabbath Recorder. First issue published, June 13, 1844. Member of the Associated Church Press. The Sabbath Recorder does not necessarily endorse signed articles.

Kevin Butler
Editor

Leanne Lippincott
Assistant Editor

Contributing Editors

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December 1996/
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Last December’s issue of “The Messenger” (newsletter of the Denver SDB Church) was a monumental labor of love and a welcome piece of mail during the usual holiday deluge. Co-editors Peggy Gaffney and Ed Hansen compiled a wonderful Christmas present for all on their mailing list.

The newsletter became a daily devotional for the month of December, with excerpts from famous books and poems, daily lyrics from Handel’s “Messiah,” seasonal illustrations, and even some recipes. Most poignant were the Christmas memories presented by members of the Denver church, some of which we present to you this year.

Have a blessed season of Advent—Editor.

The incarnation from a doctor’s perspective
by Dr. Victor Burdick

One of the most wonderful concepts in the Divine Mind is the plan of the Incarnation. How could an all-powerful Creator, whose creation had gone awry by the wrong choices of man, reach out effectively to the people He had created?

Consider the many ways He had tried throughout history to do this, but was repeatedly rejected by His people—preserving some from a flood; establishing a Chosen race to learn and obey His precepts; preparing an ideal land on which His people might dwell; allowing a dynasty of kings for leadership; sending prophet after prophet to rebuke and encourage; preserving a remnant through the terrible discipline of the destruction of Jerusalem and exile to Babylon.

What more could He do, but finally to send His own Son to Planet Earth? What better way to show the depth of His love, and to share everything we experience than to have that Son come as we all do, as a baby.

He grew as a child, met every temptation and trial we experience, delivered His message of love and grace and truth to the people especially to a selected group of disciples), and then absorbed the combined evil of our hatred, sins, and separation from God upon Himself on the cruel instrument of death, the Roman cross.

But death could not hold Him, because He was Divine. Resurrected from the grave, ascended to Heaven to return to the right hand of Father God, He sent His Spirit to dwell among all believers. He prepared and empowered His disciples to spread the message to all the world. This continues today through the witness of each of us.

At this time of year, we focus upon that event in which God became a baby—conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of a Virgin—totally human, yet totally Divine. We look at the baby and see that:

• the voice crying in hunger had spoken the world into existence.
• the hand clenching the finger of a teenage girl had molded man into His own image, and would later be spiked to a wooden cross.
• the feet kicking playfully in the air would later collect the dust of the earth, walk upon water, be pierced with nails stapling Him to the cross, and someday stand upon a splitting Mount of Olives.
• the heart racing rapidly in the stress of His crying would be full of compassion for the broken and grace for His followers, and would later be broken and pierced in His hour of agony for all of us.

Even for those of us who do this, how important it is to see beyond the beautiful image of a Babe in the manger, to see the shadow of the cross falling upon that manager.

The manger has no significance apart from the cross. The Baby Boy was a Baby Lamb, to be sacrificed for our sins, open the way for Hope, the assurance of eternal life.
Quarantined!
by Bob Spreadborough

Christmas 1939. We were totally prepared for the annual Christmas Cantata and all-school Christmas party. Teachers had urged us to practice our songs and our parts in plays and skits. We had a lot of fun and laughter in our rehearsals. It seemed that all of the kids in school felt like there was a spirit of excitement, music, and joy in the air. But within a few more days to go until Christmas, some of the kids began getting sore throats and coughs. The school nurse began to check us out.

Soon, we were told that there was an epidemic of measles making the rounds. Kids were being sent home, then the county health department would go to their house. After confirming that it was measles, they would tack a grim sign on our door. It looked like this would be our first Christmas we could recall that we had no presents to exchange.

It was a humbling moment for them to accept the gifts. But Dad said that it was wonderful to see the look of happiness in the faces of those who had brought them. We were very excited to receive gifts, food, fruit, nuts, and candy.

By Order of

The County Health Department

QUARANTINED

MEASLES

Do not enter or leave these premises under penalty of law. This sign may not be removed by anyone from two weeks from this date.

It was a finger-tingling job in the cold weather!

Early morning serenades
by Doris Rood

As I think about Christmas, vivid memories from my years as a teenager in the Boulder, Colo., Seventh Day Baptist Church come to mind.

One clear image was when we would go caroling early Christmas morning. And I mean early. We would leave the church between four and five o'clock, in a truck usually loaned and driven by Paul Hummel.

In the early years, the boys would load the big old pump organ onto the truck. Someone would hold a flashlight so Margaret Saunders could see to play.

In the late thirties, after Margaret left to marry Raymond Prati (and after we had acquired a portable organ), it was my privilege to play. It was a finger-tingling job in the cold weather!

We would make the rounds of all the church families to sing two or three carols in the early morning hours. We would see a light go on in the home, and someone would come out in the bathrobe and slippers to offer us cookies or candy. As it began to become light, we would head for my family's home. My dad, Ralph Coon, was pastor. Mom would have lots of hot cocoa and toasted cheese sandwiches or muffins ready for breakfast. The large grate over the one-eyed furnace was a popular place to congregate.

When we were sufficiently warmed and filled, everyone would disperse to their individual homes for family celebrations. On one of my last Christmases in Boulder, Mary Hummel Wells was allowed to drive her dad's truck for us. At our last stop (at least, it turned out to be our last), we were at Darwin Andrews' house way out in the country. (It is now a heavily populated area of south Boulder.)

Mary was having trouble with the truck. I think it was stuck in the mud. Anyway, she stripped the gears, and we all had to walk the distance back to our house. It was cold. I missed that tradition after I moved from Boulder. However, we did not repeat it since winters in Wisconsin were much colder than in Colorado.

December 1996/7
The day after Christmas
by Pastor Jim Galanaugh

This particular holiday season is, without a doubt, my favorite. Whether we all agree or not about the time of the Savior’s birth, one thing is certain: “I bring to you good news of great joy that will be for all people. A Savior has been born!” If you can get past the glitter and greed, the season is about the Messiah and the Good News. For me, Christmas is like a mountaintop experience. Our home is decorated with seasonal antiques, and the noticeable smell of evergreen permeates the house. The pine tree is trimmed with personalized ornaments and, you guessed it, candy canes! More importantly, there is a sense of joy, happiness, and tranquility deep down inside. People seem to be a whole lot nicer, and the “Scrooge” that invades our lives from time to time is put to rest. Then I realized something. What about the day after Christmas? Where does the double portion of love in the peace desert them? Did they leave that double portion of love in the barn? Did old Scrooge rear his ugly head again? Check out what happened.

The Bible says, “They returned glorifying and praising God for all the things they had seen and heard!” They, too, had to return back to the ordinary, but this time they returned as ambassadors to the King. They were the first missionaries, the first to explain the four spiritual laws and give a Billy Graham invitation. They probably even invited an unbeliever to the nearest SDB church! Christmas to them was the day after. It was the time to show God’s love to all people, not expecting something in return. They were looking for the good in people and asking the most important question in the universe: “Did you meet the King?” My prayer is that you and your family will enjoy this very special season. More importantly, remember the days after, and the “Scrooge” that invades our lives from time to time is put to rest. Then I realized something. What about the day after Christmas? Where does the double portion of love in the peace desert them? Did they leave that double portion of love in the barn? Did old Scrooge rear his ugly head again? Check out what happened.

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The day after Christmas
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The incarnation and the Lord’s Supper
by Edward Hansen

It was a difficult time, to be sure. None of us could have predicted or sensed what seemed to be an untimely demise. I remember a family member saying, “Well, it isn’t going to be a very good Christmas now. Yet, for any of us who have lost loved ones during Advent, we do not despair. For we worship the living King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the God only Wise! In the Lord’s supper we rejoice in hope!” For us, to celebrate Communion in such close proximity to Christmas is a magnificent experience. It is a unique time to praise Him, not only for what He has done (and is doing) for us, but for what He did for our loved ones who are now in direct fellowship with our Savior.

It is a time to remember that in His time, we, too, shall put away the temporal, the corruptible, to be reunited with our loved ones to give glory and honor and praise to Him who redeemed us.

Celebrating Communion soon after Christmas gives us absolute hope. Praise His Name! But what about the day after Christmas? What did the shepherds do? Did all their joy and peace desert them? Did they leave that double portion of love in the barn? Did old Scrooge rear his ugly head again? Check out what happened.

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by Edward Hansen

Traditional, our church has observed the Lord’s Supper the last weekend in December. With rare exceptions, this generally takes place one week after our Christmas Sabbath.

On the surface, it seems incongruous to reflect on the suffering and the death of Christ just a few days after the grand celebration of the Incarnation. After all, can we not revel in the joy of His birth a while longer before considering the solemnity of His death? Perhaps we tend to forget that His birth and His death are inextricably bound together. Jesus, Himself, knew He was born for the cross. For some, perhaps many of us, this celebration of the Lord’s Supper just a few days after Christmas has an additional sense of significance. My story may be similar to your own.

I was working two jobs at the time. At 10:30 p.m. on December 7th, the phone rang at the hotel where I was working.

It was my father. My mother had not been feeling well for a while, seemingly getting weaker, more lethargic. Earlier that evening, the doctor concluded that Mom should be hospitalized. While Dad was putting some things together, Mom passed out. With great anxiety, he called 911. A few hours later, he called to tell me she was in the hospital, but that her condition was much better than when she had lost consciousness.

When I saw her the next two days, she seemed to be doing satisfactorily. Her biggest concern was that she would not be good company to be around at Christmas. Sometime in the early morning of the 10th of December, she suffered a massive stroke. She soon slipped into a coma and then, within a few days, she passed away.
The night a star lost one of its points
by Gladys S. Randolph

In the stained glass window high above the altar of the Seventh Day Baptist church in Milton, Wis., is a star. It is a six-pointed star. As any loyal Hebrew would reaffirm, the six-pointed star is the Star of David—a Jewish symbol.

In the Milton arrangement, the star is flanked by Christian symbols—sheaves of wheat and bunches of grapes representing the Lord’s Supper. On the altar below stands an illuminated cross with a candle on either side. One candle represents the Old Testament, and the other the New Testament.

The cross links the two (prophesy of the coming Messiah and its fulfillment in the life of Christ, the Savior of mankind). The entire arrangement is good, and not inconsistent with our Judeo-Christian heritage.

One night, something rather impressive happened. As a church organist, I stayed later after the Christmas Eve service to practice for a big Sabbath Christmas service.

When I finally started to leave, I noticed someone had left some lights on in the rear of the sanctuary. I went back and turned them off.

As I walked back up the long main aisle to leave by a side door, I suddenly noticed a bright light from some outside source shining through the star window.

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...Continued

Ribbon Salad

To begin with, you will need:

- 1 (6 oz.) package lime gelatin
- 1 (3 oz.) package cherry gelatin
- 1/2 cup miniature marshmallows
- 1 cup heavy cream, whipped
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 4 oz. cream cheese

Dissolve lime gelatin in two cups of hot water and add two cups of cold water.

Pour into a 14x10x2 inch pan. Chill until partially set.

Dissolve lemon gelatin in one cup of hot water on top of a double boiler. Add marshmallows and stir to melt. Remove from heat. Add one cup of crushed pineapple juice and cream cheese. Beat until well blended and stir in pineapple. Cool slightly. Fold in whipped cream and mayonnaise. Chill until thickened, then pour over lime gelatin and chill until set.

Dissolve cherry gelatin in two cups of hot water. Add two cups of cold water. Chill. Pour over pineapple layer.

Makes 24 servings. (Unless you are serving David and Eric. Then it doesn't make that many servings!)

~From the kitchen of Katherine Spreadborough

From kinship to Kingship
Second of a three-part series
by Rick Perez

At the 1996 General Conference in Lacey, Wash., a challenge was delivered by Conference President John Full. The challenge regarding the "kinship system" had all the makings of a call to re-examine and renew our Seventh Day Baptist self-understanding.

With editorial license, restating the challenge in question form may sound like the following: "Does our view of ourselves in the world today enhance or hinder our potential for growth—our future existence?"

The microscope of history
A reflection on Baptist history and tradition is appropriate.

In his book, A Choosing People: The History of Seventh Day Baptists (Broadman Press, Nashville, 1995), Don Sanford makes the following statement: "William Brackney, in his book, The Baptists, identified three critical points in Baptist history which mark the unique identity of Baptists. Seventh Day Baptists have identified with each of these three, but the third was particularly important in much of the twentieth century. "The third critical point was the Baptist Bible Union in 1923 which Brackney described as the 'fundamentalist reaction to modernization forces in polity and the intellectual life of the denomination.' Its effect for most Baptists was to emphasize the complete loyalty to the Scripture and the autonomy of the Church, even at the cost of missions, fellowship, and unity as a denomination."

"Differences in interpretation brought differences in both theology and polity. The distance between many Baptists increased, and became even greater than between some Baptists and non-Baptists, as the result of the formation of the Baptist Bible Union."

"The differences surrounding this union were largely responsible for the description which Henry Warner Bowden gave of the Baptists as 'a denomination known for ideological squabbling and institutional splintering.'"

Sanford then posits a refining statement regarding the distinctive experience and history of Seventh Day Baptists. This brings more focus to our particular call for re-examination and possible renewal:

"The ideas surrounding the Baptist Bible Union of 1923 did not cause the same degree of 'institutional splintering' among Seventh Day Baptists which was found in several other Baptist groups. Their small size, common heritage, family relationships and commitment to the distinctive doctrine of the Sabbath prevented the formation of separate denominations to express..."
Let us together pray for open hearts and open minds to let Jesus in. When Jesus is King of our hearts, He will be King of our kinship groups.

And the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which shall be for all the people” (Luke 2:10 NASB).

The book Angels Must Get Their Wings by Helping Little Angels Like Me, by David and Elizabeth Holler (Kensington Books, New York, 1995), is a delightful book which gives us children's ideas about angels.

I used the book and the Scriptures to prepare a Bible study on angels. As we celebrate Jesus' birth, let's remember the important role the angels played in this great event.

What is an angel? According to the children in Holler's book, an angel is "somebody who plays harp songs such as 'Kiss An Angel Good Morning' or "a spirit that enjoys praying as much as we love jumping rope and coloring."

What do angels look like? The children said that angels are "no feet, no arms, just all heart;" "they always look like ladies with gold and white dresses on and the biggest thing they have are good manners;" and "some angels are white, some are black, the color doesn't make any difference. It's the heavenly thoughts that count."

What do angels do? "Angels have pep rallies in heaven—it gets them all geared up to tackle the world. "Angels are like the park rangers of the whole universe with heaven as their home base of operations." Angels "are God's biggest helpers, but they aren't like servants because God treats them like one of the family."

The Bible teaches us that angels were created by God and Jesus (Col. 1:16). They were created before the earth was (Job 38:4-7); they were created holy (Mark 9:5); they will not die (Luke 20:35); and there are myriads (myriad=ten thousand) of angels or an infinitely large number of angels (Daniel 7:10).

Angels have intelligence and are concerned with humans' salvation (1 Peter 1:12). Angels have their own language (1 Cor. 13:1). Angels have emotions (Luke 15:10; 2:13-14). Some angels have wings (1 Kings 6:27).

Thank the Lord for the part the angels played in His plan for the world.

Angels have a variety of responsibilities and have performed many duties—

• An angel rolled back a stone (Luke 24:2-4).
• Angels closed the mouths of lions (Daniel 6:22).
• Angels opened prison doors, loosened chains (Acts 12:9).
• Angels are in places of control (Rev. 7:1).
• Angels are messengers for God and bring His good news (Luke 1:13,30; 2:9).
• Angels praise and worship God (Rev. 5:11-12).
• They are watchers or supervisors and agents of God involved in the affairs of the world (Daniel 4:13,17).
• They can judge (Gen. 19:13; Ps. 78:49).

They can protect (Psalm 91:11; 2 Kings 6:14-17).
• They can minister to people in need (Hagar—Gen. 16:7-13; Elijah—1 Kings 19:5-7).

Two angels are given names in the Bible. Michael is the archangel, the leader of the army of angels who overcome Satan. Michael is the prince of God's people Israel, God's messenger of law and judgment, the one who will announce Jesus' return (Luke 9:13; Dan. 10:13; 12:1; Rev. 7:1-2; 1 Thess. 4:16).

Gabriel is the angel who stands in God's presence, the "mighty one of God." He is the messenger of mercy and promise and good news (Luke 1:19,26; Daniel 8:16,9,21).

Angels can't call God "Father," only "Creator." Angels can't preach the Gospel or be redeemed. Angels can't dwell in men—only the Holy Spirit can.

Angels of God do not act out of their own will, only the will of God. Angels can't become human, and humans don't become angels. (Heb. 12:22-23). Angels should not be worshipped (Rev. 22:8-9).

As we sing the wonderful carols of Christmas, be aware of those songs that mention the angels. Thank the Lord for the part the angels played in His plan for the world. $

P.S. Is your church interested in hosting a Summer Christian Service Corps (SCSC) team this summer? Do you have young people in your church who might want to consider serving the Lord this summer? Begin praying for God's direction and guidance for your church and youth. Is a door opening for SCSC involvement?
December 7, 1996, marks three and a quarter centuries of a Seventh Day Baptist covenant relationship in America. It was on this date in 1671 that seven people signed the covenant which led to the formation of the Newport, R.I., SDB Church sixteen days later.

After serious consideration and seeking God's face among ourselves for the Lord to direct us in a right way for us, and our children, so as might be for God's glory and our soul's good and others example, we, viz. Wil­liam Hiscox, Samuel Hubbard, Stephen Mumford, Roger Bax­ter, Tacy Hubbard, Rachel Langworthy, Anne Mumford, entered into covenant with the Lord and with one another, and gave up ourselves to God and one another to walk together in all God's holy commandments and holy ordinances according to what the Lord had discovered to us or should discover to be his mind for us to be obedient unto; with sense upon our hearts of great need to watchful over one another, did promise so to do, in edifying and building up one another in our most holy faith; this 7th Day of December 1671.

December 23, 1671, is generally given as the birthdate for the first Seventh Day Baptist church in America. Yet there was a considerable time of gestation accompanied by discomfort and labor pains. Edwin Gaustad writes about this in his biographical sketch of Obadi­ah Holmes (Baptist Piety, 1989). Holmes was a key figure in the discussion within the First Baptist Church of Newport which led to the separation. Gustad points out that the six years be­tween Tacy Hubbard's first accept­ance of the Sabbath and the separa­tion "were years of painful deci­sion and almost daily discomfort."

Four questions were raised from the Sabbatarian side:
1) How much proselytizing of others within the church was appropriate?
2) Could one still take Communion with non-Sabbathkeepers?
3) How much loyalty did the Hubbard family owe to the First Baptist Church of which they were members?
4) How should one behave toward those who became Sabbatharians and then changed their minds?

This was last question which forced a separation from the moth­er church. Two couples, Nicholas Wyld and John Salmon and their wives, had been among the earliest to accept the Sabbath. But early in 1676, they gave up the observance of the Seventh Day and even spoke against it. However, this apostasy alone would not have caused a separa­tion from Communion. This is one of the reasons why so many of the old church records were filled with at­tempts to discipline those members who had given evidence of a break­ing of the covenant.

William Hiscox, the Hubbards, and the others who were convicted of the Sabbath did not treat worship on the first day as a break­ing of the covenant for those who had never made the Sabbath a part of their covenant conviction.

But with those who had once ac­cepted and then given up it, their covenant relationship was broken. They could no longer, in good con­science, share Communion with the Baptist church in which the Wylds and Salmon were still accepted.

When the five Sabbathkeepers withdrew from the Communion and held their own service on the Sab­bath with the Stephen Mumfords (who had been Sabbathkeepers in cont. on page 26)

Pears from the Past by Don A. Sanford, historian

A 325-year covenant

LaTourette pointed out (Three Cen­turies of Advance, Harper, 1959), the fathers who had brought the religious foundation to New Eng­land did not always succeed in transmitting their own experiences and convictions to their children and grandchildren.

The children of such members were baptized, but due to the usual lack of any meaningful experience, they could not become full members of the church. This led to what was nicknamed a half-way covenant.

These people might receive one of the signs of a covenant, baptism, but unless they could present evi­dence of "regeneration," they could not participate in Communion as a sign of the renewal of that cov­enant. They could not renew that which they had never experienced.

Baptists did not recognize any half-way covenant. Since baptism was only for believers, it was ex­pected—even demanded—that the covenant be renewed in the sacra­ment of Communion. This is one of the reasons why so many of the old church records were filled with at­tempts to discipline those members who had given evidence of a break­ing of the covenant.

William Hiscox, the Hubbards, and the others who were convicted of the Sabbath did not treat worship on the first day as a break­ing of the covenant for those who had never made the Sabbath a part of their covenant conviction.

But with those who had once ac­cepted and then given up it, their covenant relationship was broken. They could no longer, in good con­science, share Communion with the Baptist church in which the Wylds and Salmon were still accepted.

When the five Sabbathkeepers withdrew from the Communion and held their own service on the Sab­bath with the Stephen Mumfords (who had been Sabbathkeepers in cont. on page 26)

One year ago—December 1995

The growing men's movement, Promise Keepers, provides the theme. Milton, Wis., SDB attendees and writers include Ralph Hays Jr., Doug Lubke, Steve Osborn, Jon Cruzan, and Alan and Nathan Walker.


Paster Nick Fatato welcomed to the Battle Creek, Mich., church in September.

North Central Association gathers in Battle Creek in October.

"Beacon" page shares a Christmas story from Phyllis Mattison, Alfred Station, N.Y.

Five years ago—December 1991

Authors share about mixed-race or foreign adop­tions. Writers include Glen and Nancy Warner, Eddie Henry, Shelley Warner, and Jane Mackintosh.


President Myron Soper reflects on his first major church visitation trip of the Conference year.

Sabbath School Teacher of the Year profiled: Ruth Bennett from Battle Creek, Mich.

Another SDB Health Camp held in Andhra Pra­adesh, India.

Central SDB Church in Maryland celebrates a "Religious Liberty" Sabbath.

10 years ago—December 1986

George Parrish, from Battle Creek, is honored as Sabbath School Teacher of the Year.

The newly adopted SDB Statement of Belief is pre­sented. Final vote to be taken by church roll call on the floor of the 1897 Conference.

"Beacon" page suggests Christmas service projects.

A portion of Leon Wheeler's pastoral ordination paper is shared.

Madeline Fitz Randolph, Boulder, Colo., receives the Rube of Achievement.

T.I.M.E. students (Training in Ministry by Extens­ion) meet in Boulder.

25 years ago—December 1971

Descon Mark Sanford of Little Genesee, N.Y., makes a wrought iron candelabrum to celebrate the 300th anniversary of SDBs in America.

Editorial decries the heavy use of alcohol during the Christmas season.

New marker commemorates the 1856 organization of the Rock River SDB Church in southern Wisconsin. The church disbanded in 1917.

The new Living Bible paraphrase criticized for its Sabbath-Sunday passages.

A chimney fire damages the Bell SDB Church in Salemville, Pa. Repairs to be completed before Christmas.

50 years ago—December 1946

Ritchie SDB Church of Beren, W.Va., retires the remaining debt on their church property.

Article on youthful offenders appears on the Christian Education page from the pen of J. Edgar Hoover.

Los Angeles is the site of the semiannual Pacific Coast Association in October.

Leon Malaby assumes pastoral in Riverside, Calif. Conference President Everett Harris spreads his theme, "Saved to Serve."

Gerald Bond sets up an SDB bookstore in Madison, Wis.

...where are we headed?

Pray—
- for spiritual leadership from our men
- that Bible study becomes a priority
- for those going through the adoption process
- for the medical outreach on foreign fields
- for your church's youth fellowship
- for T.I.M.E. students and teacher Rod Henry
- for a safe and blessed Christmas
Pastor Jus Start was reviewing his lesson notes just before Sabbath School opened when he was approached by Mr. Newmember.

"What a wonderful time I had at Conference! The organ and choir was heavenly. Those young people in Stained Glass were so polite, friendly, and radiant. Will our Sabbath School try to win the Scripture Memory Silver Bowl? Is Conference always that inspiring?" Descon Faithful, bearing the last question, commented that Conference was often the high point in his year.

Mr. Newmember shifted his focus to Descon Faithful and continued, "I had the idea that Seventh Day Baptists are a Great Commandment people but don't practice the Great Commission. Did you hear that? How is it possible to follow Christ and not love God, our love for each other becomes a self-focused love. The Great Commandment and the Great Commission are the essence—essential elements—of our faith. The important question for us as Christians is, 'Will the form of our faith follow from its essence?'"

Mr. Newmember, looking puzzled, confessed, "I don't understand. What does all of this theology have to do with a bow and an arrow?"

Pastor Start explained, "If you will accept that the bow represents God's love (Great Commandment) and the arrow represents our willingness to reach the world for Christ and to teach them all He has taught, then the bow of God's love operates as He intended when the arrow of Christ is released to deliver His life message. The bow without an arrow is in an incomplete and limited state. Our acceptance and return of God's love—and His commandment that we love our neighbor—provides the basis for our acceptance of Christ's Commission.

"Pastor, I think I understand. It's like a coin, with the Great Commission on one side and the Great Commandment on the other. One may be visible while the other is hidden, but both are still there, just like both sides of the coin are always there. If I spend the coin, I spend both sides. How I spend the coin is significant.

"Thanks for helping me to understand that the Great Commandment, the Great Commission is up to be disobeyed or corrupted. Without love for God, our love for each other becomes a self-focused love. The Great Commandment and the Great Commission are the essence of my faith and that the essential question is, 'Will the form of my faith follow its essence?'

When we talk of SDB-sponsored medical work, we should begin with Malawi, Africa. Malawi has a more extensive setup than any of the other countries in which Seventh Day Baptists are located.

There are six SDB hospitals and clinics in Malawi. Most of them are located in the southern portion of the country. Most are attached to the Great Commission and the Great Commandment are mutually exclusive. I feel that the relationship between the Great Commandment and the Great Commission are better illustrated by an analogy.

Pastor Jus Start began drawing a bow and an arrow on the chalkboard while he continued talking. "I feel that the Great Commandment is the foundational structure of our Christian faith. Upon our love for God, all else is built. The Great Commandment is the corrective to the potential idolatry in each of us—as individuals and as groups—to assume the role of God. The Great Commandment calls to us to focus upon God who sent His Son, Jesus Christ, our life example and teacher.

Without the Great Commandment, the Great Commission is apt to be disobeyed or corrupted. Without love for God, our love for each other becomes a self-focused love. The Great Commandment and the Great Commission are the essence of my faith and that the essential question is, 'Will the form of my faith follow its essence?'"
Youth prayer chain started for SDBs on e-mail

by Kecia Thompsongordon

In today's day and time, being a Christian is harder than ever. It is especially hard for the youth. While battling the stresses of fitting in and growing up, today's youth must rely on their faith in God, for only in Him can we find the strength to carry on.

It is always good to know that we are not alone in our faith; that there are others who have or are going through the same problems and frustrations—someone who is in our corner praying for us. It is also good to know that others can rejoice during our time of triumph in the Lord.

That is what "Chain Links" is about. We hope to bring encouragement to the high school/college-age youth of today. We also enjoy hearing about the good fortune of our brethren. "Chain Links" is made up of four college-age youth. They are:

Cathy Rogers
Biddle Hall Rm. 331
51 East Green St.
Athens, OH 45701
e-mail: mr8754966@oak.cats.ohiou.edu
(614) 597-8398

John Mark Camenga
Pethtel@salem.wvnet.edu

Kecia Thompsongordon
1453 Eden Dr.
Deltona, FL 32725
e-mail: kthomps@tophat.stetson.edu
(904) 532-2869
fax: (904) 532-5993

John Pethtel
Pethtel@salem.wvnet.edu

Names of saints and angels from the Bible and early Church are known throughout the world—Augustine, Gabriel, John, Katherine, Raphael. Perhaps unknown are the events of their lives and the heroic deeds that precipitated their widespread recognition.

Saints and Angels All Around and Men and Women of the Word, two new devotionals from Concordia Publishing House (CPH), bring to light the lives of saints and angels for readers to enjoy and be encouraged by today.

These releases offer an opportunity for 20th century Christians to spend some time with early "runners in the race." With each devotion, readers glimpse into heroic lives lived as a testimony of God's love.

Saints and Angels All Around gives an introduction to the biblical role of unseen angels who journey from heaven to earth to do the Lord's bidding. And it profiles the lives of early saints who faithfully clung to God's Word in the midst of discouragement, persecution, and political and social chaos. Each devotion is rich in human interest, warmth, and relevant points for life application.

Men and Women of the Word focuses on men and women of the Bible who risked life itself to follow the King of Kings. Every reading gives a down-to-earth profile of saints whose ordinary lives were made extraordinary by God's grace.

In their loyalty, love, courage, and trust in God, readers can see the gifts of grace available to all believers.

About the authors

Gregory Wismar, author of Saints and Angels All Around, is a pastor who also leads tours through Germany and the Holy Land, giving Christians an opportunity to discover their religious and historical roots.

Jaroslav Vajda, author of Men and Women of the Word, is considered the greatest living American hymn-writer by the Hymn Society of the United States and Canada. He has written over 190 hymn texts.

Available directly from Concordia Publishing House (1-800-325-3040) or through your local Christian bookstore. $8.99 each, 160 pp.

No need to be a scholar with this commentary series

Greek and Hebrew are not prerequisites for in-depth Bible study when you have the People's Bible Commentary. This helpful series takes relevant background information, comments on the original text, and life-application notes, and pairs them with the NIV Bible text to open doors to a richer study of God's Word.

Two additions to the series, Leviticus and Numbers, serve as extremely useful Old Testament Bible study tools. Leviticus offers new opportunities for Christians to understand seemingly obscure laws recorded in the Old Testament and see their meaning for life today.

Numbers sheds helpful light on the account of Israel's journey from Mount Sinai to the border of Canaan. Readers see how God leads them with His presence through the wilderness times and to the Promised Land.

These two new additions bring the series total to 28. Paperback, $10.99 each. Leviticus (282 pp.) Numbers (294 pp.)

Available from Concordia Publishing House (1-800-325-3040) or through your local Christian bookstore.

December 1996
Five added to NY diaconate

On Sabbath, September 28, 1996, the New York City SDB Church ordained five members to the Diaconate.

Deaconess Kathleen Gordon, Cirrina Salmon, and Dorothy Radcliffe have been serving on the Diaconate for over five years. The ordination service was led by Deacons Leonard Stewart and Clinton Caesar, both from the home church. Other participants included Rev. Joe Samuel, pastor of the Plainfield, N.J., SDB Church, who gave the charge to the candidates and led the ordination prayer; Pastor Kenroy Cruickshank, pastor of the Hope church in Philadelphia, gave the charge to the church; and Deaconess Vera Stewart, presented the candidates with their ordination certificates. Special music by the Gospel Harold Smith, the leader of our branch church in the Bronx, was issued a license to preach. He will be a student in the denominational Training in Ministry by Extension (T.I.M.E.) program. The service concluded with newly ordained Deacon West pronouncing the benediction.

Eric Davis ordained

October 19, 1996, was surely a High Sabbath in Riverside, Calif. In addition to the regular schedule of Pacific Coast Association—Bible study, Sabbath School, worship, men’s sing, and annual meeting—the afternoon session was particularly special.

Introducing the theme “Tuned in to God,” Pastor Gabriel Bejjani chaired a morning Bible study which drew the 40-plus attendees into wholehearted sharing. Associate Pastor Eric Davis’ sermon during worship expanded on the theme.

The men’s sing of almost 30 voices, led by RuthAnne Peil, introduced the afternoon ordination service. Pastor Eric had arranged this service with care, and the smooth-flowing, uplifting preparation was evident.

Six pastors and three Riverside laymen (one from the SDB Council on Ministry) participated, and several more pastors joined in the “laying on of hands” ceremony. Eric’s mother, brother, aunt, and uncle, with their spouses, came from New York, Colorado, and Washington states to help us welcome him into the ordained ministry of Seventh Day Baptists.

A reception in the fellowship hall concluded the inspiring afternoon, a truly High Sabbath.

Berlin church holds retreat

On October 12, 1996, the Berlin, N.Y., Seventh Day Baptist Church held an all-day retreat. It was a new experience for the congregation, and was enjoyed by everyone.

The retreat started with a continental breakfast at 9:00 a.m., and ended about 3:00 p.m. with a sing-along around the fireplace at Max Hall. More than 50 people attended church, and nearly everyone was able to stay for at least part of the day.

More than 50 people attended church, and nearly everyone was able to stay for at least part of the day.

Kevin Butler, Director of Communications for the Tract and Communication Council, brought the morning message. He also presented two one-hour seminars on “The Sovereignty of God,” which was the theme for the day.

The day’s program included a prayer and praise time, fellowship luncheon, children’s program, recreation time, cookout supper, and vespers.

Those attending the retreat increased their knowledge of God’s sovereignty while enjoying a full day of Christian fellowship.

God’s timing

For over two years, the West Palm Beach (Fla.) Baptist-Seventh Day Church had prayed that it would be allowed to have services in the beautiful sanctuary, instead of the rented fellowship hall. God answered that prayer on October 26, 1996, the same day of our second Musical Extravaganza.

This was certainly a day of spiritual blessing. Pastor William Vis preached on “New Beginnings” and reminded us that this was a “re-beginning.” He exhorted us to build on what we had started. The day climaxed with over 200 individuals joining us that evening in musical praise and adoration.

The Miami children’s choir (with 23 members), stole the show as they sang the books of the Bible and “Champions” to modern rhythm and actions. The adult choir debut was heartwarming and spiritually uplifting.

SR Reaction

Dear SR,

I got my October issue and, as always, I sat right down to read the entire magazine. For the first time, though, I feel I should share my thoughts on a particular item of interest: the Disney boycott. I disagree with the boycott, and I’ll explain why.

The Disney Company is the foremost entertainer in family entertainment and will most likely continue to be. However, the Disney Company is not a Christian-based company. They don’t answer to Christians and their representatives.

The Disney CEOs answer to stockholders and a Board of Directors. Their motive is profit, not Christian charity. Therefore, we should pick and choose which of their products we want to allow our young children to watch or enjoy.

Let me give you an example. My Bible plainly states “the body is the temple of the Lord.” I would not want to defile the Lord’s temple with cigarettes. However, every supermarket sells tobacco products. If I boycotted the supermarkets, I’d certainly go hungry.

Likewise, if we boycott the Disney Company, we sure do limit the entertainment available to our families. So, I think we need to keep the issues separate—Christian entertainment or secular entertainment, which Disney is.

Sincerely, with love,

Susan E. Epp
Grover Beach, CA

By Matthew Olson

By Jasmine Lynch
What’s this ‘kinship’ stuff?

Personal notes on the 1996 annual Conference

by Kyle D. Pratt

Arriving for this, my first Conference, on Sunday afternoon, August 4, I was dressed in my usual church clothes—a suit and tie, and my best dress shoes. I was definitely overdressed.

I quickly noticed that most men wore casual shirts, slacks, sneakers, or other comfortable shoes. I did, however, notice that dresses—

e-mail access. We also encouraged greater use of the Internet and asked General Conference to establish a resource list of persons experienced in computers and Internet use so that churches interested in using this technology can receive assistance.

The most controversial moment of Conference occurred on Thurs-

day when the Christian Social Action Interest Committee proposed a resolution to reaffirm the denominational commitment to a pro-life position, with an additional paragraph declaring opposition to euthanasia. The measure was tabled until the Friday business session.

I was pleased that there was no debate on the pro-life part of the resolution. The debate on euthanasia centered on when it might be appropriate to end the suffering of a terminally ill person. In the end, the majority reaffirmed a solidly pro-life position on abortion, and put the denomination on record as opposing both passive and active euthanasia.

Gabriel Bejani and Dale Thorn-
gate gave a talk and slide show on the SDB World Federation. They stated that the Federation now recognizes SDB churches in 18 countries on six continents.

SDB Missionary Society

Bibles

In most countries, it’s difficult to obtain Bibles. Specific requests come from: Cameroon, Ghana, Guyana, India (both Conferences), Indonesia, Malawi, Nigeria, Peru, the Philippines, Rwanda, Russia, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Zaïre, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Glasses for ministers, evangelists

Discarded glasses can be sent directly overseas. We would also be happy to forward funds to help purchase glasses.

Sewing machines

Funds may be sent to the Missionary Society or directly to the countries where sewing machines are available. Machines may also be purchased here and then shipped. Last year, we were able to provide sewing machines to Jamaica, Guyana, Malawi, and Zambia. People in the U.S. have sent 14 sewing machines in the past year.

Malawi Bible College

Bibles, reference materials, study materials, and scholarship help still needed. (Students pay $500 per semester.) They can also use funds for student clothing and bedding.

Orphanage in Nellore, India

Still needs funds to complete their final buildings: a clinic and school. The orphanage is open and running.

SDB Board of Christian Education

Helping Hands

For Jamaica: The currency exchange rate and bank draft expenses create an additional financial burden for our Jamaican brethren. Will you help us provide these valuable Sabbath School quarterlies for the people of Jamaica?

For America and Canada:

Some of our newer or smaller SDB groups would like to use the Helping Hand but face mounting church operating costs. Could you help a new or small church add to their Sabbath School experience?

Stained Glass

This exciting college-age singing group finished the ‘96 summer tour with a $4,000 deficit. Your Christmas gift for “Stained Glass” will help them (and the Mackintoshes) balance their books. You may make your checks payable to “Foot Hill Community Church” and send them to our Board.

22 / The SIR
**Accessions**

- Berlin, NY
  - Matthews Olson, pastor
  - Joined after baptism
  - Helena Hernandez
  - Jose Hernandez
  - Juliet Olson
  - Danyelle Rouiller

- After testimony
  - Mark Aulita
  - Bobbie Aulita
  - Mary Hernandez
  - Dick MacVeigh
  - Sandy MacVeigh

**Marriages**

- New York, NY
  - Morgan - Miller.
  - Raymond F. Morgan and Hope Tanya Miller were married on August 24, 1996, at the Fairview Nursing Home in Daytona Beach, Fla., after spending many years in a coma.

**Births**

- Murphy.
  - A son, Christian Dylan Murphy, was born to Othniel and Catherine Murphy of New York City, NY, on August 10, 1995.

**Obituaries**

- McDowell.—Therese Paré McDowell passed from this life on March 23, 1996, at the Fairview Nursing Home in Daytona Beach, Fla., after spending many years in a coma.

**Denominational Budget 1996**

- Current Giving Budget: $293,493
- Giving Year to Date: $274,009
- Short for Year to Date: -$19,484

**December 1996/25**
tion. Crosby served as president of the association for many years. Both were active in the Seventh Day Baptist church, where Crosby was a member. They volunteered at Clyatt's Quality Care Center, a nursing home where the church has maintained a ministry for many years. Crosby also served as a substitute chemistry teacher at area schools.

Survivors include two daughters, Linda Keenan of Pensacola and Susan Preston of Port Orange, Fla., and four grandchildren. Crosby is also survived by four sisters, Mary McFall and Elizabeth Surver, both of Daytona Beach; Frances Spencer of Mexico, Mo.; and Julia Childs of Orlando, Fla. Evelyn is survived by one brother, Robert Jobes, and one sister, Irene Champbella, both of Wyandotte, Mich.

A memorial service, conducted by Rev. Arthur Iseve, was held on July 13, 1996, at the Dale Underwood Funeral Home in Holly Hill, Fla. Interment was on July 27, 1996, at the cemetery of the Mount Union United Methodist Church in Morgantown, W.Va.

Kuehn.—Marguerite B. Kuehn, 78, of Hopkinton, R.I., passed away on October 18, 1996, at the Westerly (R.I.) Hospital.

Kuehn.—Marguerite B. Kuehn, 78, of Hopkinton, R.I., passed away on October 18, 1996, at the Wysterly (R.I.) Hospital.

She was born on January 17, 1912, in Gentry, Ark., the daughter of George and Ida (McAllister) Maxson. She moved to Battle Creek, Mich., in 1925, and graduated from Battle Creek Central High School in 1929.

Caldine was employed by the Battle Creek Food Co., and Family and Children Services in Battle Creek. On October 13, 1932, she married Lester M. Nelson in Battle Creek. He was co-owner of Nelson Cleaners in Battle Creek until his death in 1969.

In 1950, she moved to Sun City, Calif., and lived there until moving to Stillwater in 1988. She was a member of the Battle Creek Seventh Day Baptist Church. Survivors include two sons, Norma of Stillwater and Rolan of Stevensville, Mich., and four grandchildren. She was preceded in death by one brother, Larry Maxson.

Funeral services were held on October 8, 1996, at the Parley Bates & Dowdle Funeral Home, Battle Creek, with Rev. Nick Patz officiating. Burial was in Memorial Park Cemetery, Battle Creek.

Nelson.—B. Geraldine (Maxson) Nelson, 84, of Stillwater, Okla., died on October 5, 1996, at her home after a long illness.

On January 17, 1912, in Gentry, Ark., the daughter of George and Ida (McAllister) Maxson. She moved to Battle Creek, Mich., in 1925, and graduated from Battle Creek Central High School in 1929.

Caldine was employed by the Battle Creek Food Co., and Family and Children Services in Battle Creek. On October 13, 1932, she married Lester M. Nelson in Battle Creek. He was co-owner of Nelson Cleaners in Battle Creek until his death in 1969.

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Funeral services were held on October 8, 1996, at the Parley Bates & Dowdle Funeral Home, Battle Creek, with Rev. Nick Patz officiating. Burial was in Memorial Park Cemetery, Battle Creek.
'Twas The Night Before—
Jesus Came!

'Twas the night before Jesus came and all through the house,
Not a creature was praying, not one in the house.
Their Bibles were laid on the shelf without care,
In hopes that Jesus would not soon come there.

The children were dressing to crawl into bed,
Not once ever kneeling or bowing a head.
And mom in her rocker with the babe on her lap
Was watching the Late Show while I took a nap.

When out of the East there arose such a clatter,
I sprang to my feet to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash!

When what to my wondering eyes should appear—
But angels proclaiming that Jesus was here!
With a light like the sun sending forth a bright ray,
I knew in a moment this must be THE DAY!

The light of His face made me cover my head;
It was Jesus!—returning just like He said.
And though I possessed worldly wisdom and wealth,
I cried when I saw Him in spite of myself.

In the Book of Life, which He held in His hand,
Was written the name of every saved man.
He spoke not a word as He searched for my name.
When He said, “It’s not here,” my head hung in shame.

The people whose names had been written with love,
He gathered to take to His Father above.
With those who were ready, He rose without a sound
While all the rest were left standing around.

I fell to my knees, but it was too late;
I had waited too long, and thus sealed my fate.
I stood and I cried as they rose out of sight;
Oh, if only we had been ready tonight!

In the words of this poem, the meaning is clear:
The coming of Jesus is drawing so near!
There’s only one life and when comes the last call,
We’ll find that the Bible was true after all!

—Author unknown