Seeking Spiritual Maturity in Stewardship

- Discovering the joy in giving
- Whoopee, it's payday!
- Blest be the church that tithes
- Preaching boldly about money
Who are Seventh Day Baptists?

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

- salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.
- the Bible as the inspired word of God. The Bible is our authority for our faith and daily conduct.
- baptism of believers, by immersion, witnessing to our acceptance of Christ as Savior and Lord.
- freedom of thought under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- the congregational form of church government.

Every church member has the right to participate in the decision-making process of the church.

The seventh day

God commanded that the seventh day (Saturday) be kept holy. Jesus agreed by keeping it as a Sabbath. It is the joy of the Sabbath that makes us thankful for Christ.

The Seventh Day

Day Baptist publication

The Sabbath Recorder (ISSN 0036-214X) (USPS 474460) is published monthly combined July & August) by the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference’s Tract and Communication Council, 3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678. This publication is distributed at no cost to members and friends of Seventh Day Baptist churches and is made possible by donations from its readers. Periodicals postage paid at Sun Prairie, WI 53590.

Want to be a contributor?

Unsolicited manuscripts that include a stamped, addressed envelope can be returned. Unsolicited manuscripts are welcomed; however, they will be considered on a space available basis. No remuneration is given for any articles that appear in this publication. Paid advertising is not accepted.

Features

Discovering the joy in giving ........................................ 4
by Linda Graffius

How could an angry, penny-pitching new mother become a model of loving generosity? .......................... 6
by Linda Graffius

Year round gift-giving ideas ........................................ 6
by Linda Graffius

Try giving to others in new ways.

Whoopee, it’s payday! .................................................. 8
by Bob Speedborough

A teenager gets a good-paying job near the end of World War II, and learns a lesson for life.

Blest be the church that tithes ...................................... 10
by Stanley Allen

Unable to meet their own budget, a church steps out in faith and gives. God gives back.

Preaching boldly about money.................................... 12
by Andrew Samuels

Pastor decides to declare God’s whole counsel.

Departments

Women’s Society ......................................................... 13
Practicing good stewardship

President’s Page ......................................................... 20
Eight great seminars

Conference promotion ............................................. 21
RRed carpet ready

Local news ................................................................. 23
Durango, CO

SR Reaction ............................................................... 23

Family flux ................................................................. 24-25
Accessions, marriage, births

Obituaries ................................................................. 24-25

Kevin’s Korner ............................................................ 27
God loves a cheerful giver

Pastors’ Conference ’99

“New Ministry and New Relationships for New People”

Denver/Boulder SDB Churches April 13-17, 1999

This year at Pastors’ Conference, we will look at ways to develop new ministries to invite new people into our churches. We will also brainstorm on ways to establish relationships with these new people so that they will join us in growing in grace and knowledge of our Lord.

These discussions will also help to lay the groundwork for the new Memorial Board program that will provide $10,000 per church to develop new ministry to invite new people. The guidelines and principles of this new program will be laid out in detail.

Contact Rodney Henry at the Seventh Day Baptist Center for more information.

Pastor Profile

Dale Thorngate

19

Kevin Butler

Editor

Leanne Lippincott

Assistant Editor

Contributing Editors


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

by Linda Graffius

The children entered the room whispering in each others' ears. "Did she get off? Was she surprised?" "What did she do with it?" "Does she know who it's from?" Smiles were on their faces and giggles were in their voices. What could stir such a response from children 4 to 10 years old?

Tithing!

Earlier that month, they had listed on the blackboard the names of people they knew with needs. The group had chosen this amount because of their financial situation or their personal lives. The envelopes contained in their rooms.

As the children earned money for moving lawns or doing chores for Grandpa, they divided their money among the containers. They all thoughtfully considered their choices. As Acts 20:35 says, "It is more blessed to give than receive." When Pre-Con was over and I sat down to write our tithe checks, I didn't mind anymore. I didn't even give it a second thought! Jesus had saved me, and I wanted to give in return. I now could understand 1 Corinthians 13:3: "If I give all I possess... but have not love, I gain nothing..."

Don graduated from law school and started his first job. I began to write out a tithe check for the organization of their choice. Sometimes he was with tears in his eyes. He saw the point on my face and smiled. I walked up to him and put my arms around him and told him of this great experience. He quietly said, "We've been praying for you."

"Tithing? Yes!"

Don came into the room and said that the Lord had been with us and had provided a good job near a Seventh Day Baptist church. So Don wanted me to begin adding an extra percent to our tithe each year for a while. We had heard sermons on tithing and had discovered biblical passages that confirmed giving more than a tenth (Deut. 12:6; 11; Neh. 10:32, etc.). This time I didn't complain, and the Lord took care of us. I began buying items for the church (crayons at first, then paper, etc.) over and above our regular tithe. Sometimes I wanted to give and give and not worry about the bills!

At one time I resented tithing to the point of anger! However, today I find it to be fun, a joy, a delight, and a pleasure.

The joy of giving

Not too long after I received the joy of giving, my father-in-law shared a true experience he had while in Australia. The gentleman with whom he was staying was having trouble wearing watches, so Dad took off his own digital watch, handed it to the man, and said, "I hope this one works for you." Dad continued his stay there, then finally returned home to California. Not long after his return, a friend came up to him and gave him a watch! It's an amazing story—and what a testimony to a person who is just learning to give!

God wants to bless you

Isn't God good? The Bible says, in Malachi 3:10: "...[I] God will... pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it." I pray that you can experience the heavenly joy of giving. 

Linda Graffius is a member of the German SDB Church in Saemvlle, Pa.

Train up a child...

When my children were in elementary school and younger, I put three containers (cottage cheese cartons, plastic icing cans, or chip dip containers) in their rooms. One container was labeled "savings," one said "tithe," and the third said, "Give away." As the children earned money for mowing lawns or doing chores for Grandpa, they divided their money among the containers. When they entered their teen years, we began to give them a weekly allowance. These three containers remained in their rooms for dividing their allowance, lawn mowing money, etc.

They were allowed to give their tithe to the organization of their choice. Sometimes it was church, but it also went to Camp Joy, the Salvation Army, individuals, or other groups. One Christmas, we gave each of our children an envelope labeled with their name. The envelopes contained a check with the amount written in, but not the payee. They were told to write the check to the organization or individual of their choice.
Year round gift-giving ideas

by Linda Graffius

I would like to pass on to others the “gift of giving.” Here are a few ideas to consider:

Never too young to start

Parents of my Sabbath School pre-schoolers were asked to give their kids a penny the following week if they obeyed, said “thank you,” shared, didn’t hit their sister/brother, etc. They brought their pennies to the sink, went to bed the first time they were asked, and so forth.

The next Sabbath the children were to bring 10 percent of their pennies. Since they are learning to count, we began counting the pennies to encourage helpfulness and kind spirit.

A favorite day is when we ask the children to bring all their pennies to school, with a note saying, “I would like to pass on to others the joy of giving.” Of course, don’t forget the pastor’s salary, is adequate. But your pastor’s family needs to know personally that you care. Try giving a gift certificate to a local store or restaurant, a card of appreciation, an evening out to the movies or dinner with your, or offer to baby-sit so they can have a date.

Time is a valuable gift

And don’t forget the tithe. Offering are given joyfully, then consider other Christian organizations: the Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society, SDB Relief Fund, Bible societies, Christian Evangelism Fellowship, Christian singing groups, local relief organizations, Christian politicians (a man in my church has and will run for County Commissioner, and I help as his treasurer), crisis pregnancy centers, and so forth.

There are so many ways to give from home. We see examples of people titling, giving gifts, and bringing offerings. Genesis 4:3—Cain and Abel’s offerings; Genesis 14:20—Abraham to Melchizedek; Matthew—Mary and Joseph going to the temple with their offerings; Revelation—men giving their lives for God and knowing they would spend eternity with Him.

Tithing is more than money

Of course, tithing doesn’t have to be cash only. Leviticus 27:30-32 says, “A tithe of every thing from the land, whether grain...or fruit from trees...herd and flock...”

Tithing can include many tangible items. In Bible School and Children’s Church, I have asked the children on various days to bring pencils, pens, spoons of thread, needles, safety pins, stamps, an item of clothing, etc. The children knew that their gift would be sent to other countries.

In craft class, they decorated plastic icing containers with flannel to be used as sewing kits, filled with the items they brought. What fun the children had bringing their tithes! The Ladies Aid collected their own tithes to help mail the packages.

Give in secret

Another fun way to give is to buy a gift (book, spatula, or—think big!—food processor, dishes) and leave it on the porch of an individual with whom you are a friend, or who was moving away. Then they held a “gift shower.” They bought or shared, didn’t hit their sister/ brother, etc. They gave anonymous gifts to the men.

Remember special events and people

Sometimes the women selected a person in the church who had a birthday, who wasn’t feeling well, or who was moving away. Then they held a “gift shower.” They bought or shared, wrapped, and gave nonsense and practical gifts. What an upliftling and sometimes tearful time!

How to receive a gift

If you are a recipient of a gift, don’t refuse it, give it back, say “you didn’t have to do this,” or leave money on their table when you leave. Do not deprecate the giver of the joy of giving. Remember that he or she felt led to give you the gift. Just thank them and the Lord.

Have you made a cake or pie recently and given it all to a bachelor in your church, or to a man recently widowed, or to one of the children in your Sabbath School class, without keeping any for yourself? Try it. It’s fun!

Every time you give of your time, your efforts or resources, your talents or gifts, you are giving back to the Lord what He has given to you.

Of course, don’t forget the pastor and family. Remember some of these items are not “tithing.” However, every time you give of your time, your efforts or resources, your skills, your talents or gifts, you are giving back to the Lord what He has given to you.

Some of you may be thinking that some of these items are not “tithing.” However, every time you give of your time, your efforts or resources, your skills, your talents or gifts, you are giving back to the Lord what He has given to you.

From the beginning in Genesis, we see examples of people titling, giving gifts, and bringing offerings. Genesis 4:3—Cain and Abel’s offerings; Genesis 14:20—Abraham to Melchizedek; Matthew—Mary and Joseph going to the temple with their offerings; Revelation—men giving their lives for God and knowing they would spend eternity with Him.

In this last part of the 20th century, we must continue to follow this biblical example. Throughout the Bible we see individuals and groups who gave willingly, some who gave grudgingly. Join me in being part of the group that gives willingly, joyfully, happily, excitedly, exuberantly, expectantly. Oh, what fun!
Whoopee, it's payday!
by Bob Spreadborough

"He who gathers crops in summer is a wise son, but he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son." (Proverbs 10:5, NIV)

Woo! My first paycheck from a real job!

I was 15 years old that summer of 1945, enjoying the break from school. I had obtained a "work permit" and was employed by the Kaiser Shipyard in Vancouver, Wash. World War II was in progress, with the armed forces taking much of the available labor force. That meant a shortage of workers and plenty of jobs. And the pay was good. I was really excited about getting my first paycheck.

The average minimum wage at the time was about 50 cents an hour. But my shipyard job as an electrician's helper paid 65 cents an hour. Two weeks' wages amounted to a gross paycheck of $52. After insurance and tax deductions, I received the grand sum of $45.

I remember looking at that first paycheck and thinking, "Whoopee, it's payday! What a lot of money!" Then I thought about how much fun it was going to be to go to the amusement park with my friends; to buy rides on the roller coaster, Ferris wheel, and bumper cars; to play dart board games, and eat hot dogs and cotton candy.

My mom had tactfully asked if I had a plan for my new-found wealth. She knew this was the most money I had ever had at my disposal, and gently tried to guide me into figuring out how it should be spent.

When I mentioned the amusement park, she smiled and said she understood my desire to do that. "But have you figured out what obligations you need to take care of first?" she asked.

"No," I admitted. "I haven't thought of that."

"What things need taking care of?" I asked reluctantly. In my mind's eye, my paycheck was about to disappear and the amusement park with it.

We sat down at the kitchen table, took out a tablet and pencil, and listed my expenses: 50 cents per day for 10 days for the car pool, and $75.00 for two weeks' room and board. Did I want to set aside a portion of my paycheck—perhaps 10 percent—for charity or a tithe? Did I need to designate $5.00 for clothing? I said "yes" to each of these questions.

There on the tablet, I could see how much I needed to pay out. It was more than half my check. But I still would have about $20.00. Mom asked if I would put any of it in a savings account. "No," I don't think so," I replied.

Because of Mom's suggestion that I tithe, I set the money aside. I'll send it to our church later, I thought. This was my idea of good stewardship. If my arm could have reached, I would have patted myself on the back and said, "See how good I am!"

Saturday night was exciting. My friends and I had loads of fun on the rides, especially the roller coaster. When the coaster cars stopped, we remained seated and paid for another ride.

The amusement park was made for fun, and that's what we were there for. By the time I spent my last dollar, it was late in the evening. My friends and I returned home, broke but satisfied.

Throughout the summer, I looked forward eagerly to each payday because I was broke. When I got my check, I quickly took care of my immediate obligations. Then I gathered what was left and spent it on entertainment. Of course, I always patted myself on the back because I was paying my tithe.

The summer months seemed to fly by. At the end of August, I turned in my shipyard badge at the guard gate. I collected my final paycheck and was soon back in high school. With my last paycheck, I paid my car pool bill, my board and room, and my tithe. I spent the rest on school clothes.

Since I had grown used to spending the surplus from my paycheck on fun, I had saved nothing for the coming school year. But because I had been tithing from my earnings, I had convinced myself that I was a faithful steward.

As the school year progressed, I needed to pay student body dues and buy more clothes. But I didn't have any money. Who could I go to for help? Mom and Dad, of course.

They reminded me that, while I was working, I should have set aside money for the coming year. Had I really been a good steward by paying just tithe money while I worked?

I had been earning exceptional wages for my age. I had been paying my way while I worked, but I had been spending the leftover money on my own pleasure. Yes, I had been blessed with a good-paying job. But if I had been a good steward, I would have done more than just pay my way as I went along. I should have been thinking about saving as much as I could for the time when I wasn't working.

If I had saved some money, I could have paid my own way during the months following my summer job. I could have shown my mom and dad that I had set aside enough so that I wouldn't need their financial help.

The stewardship that I practiced that long-ago summer was what I could call "whoopee stewardship." I patted myself on the back for tithing, but I had squandered my money. I neglected to look ahead.

The lesson I learned as a 15-year-old is as valuable today as it was then: stewardship is more than paying a tithe. May God help all of us to remember that!

Bob Spreadborough is a member of the Seattle Area SDB Church in Auburn, Wash.
Blest be the church that tithes

by Stanley Allen

We can quote all the verses about tithing in the Bible, but until we put it into practice, it has no power.

The "tithe" is one of the strongest and most powerful weapons in God's arsenal. How can that be? The Bible in both the Old and New Testaments, is full of situations where we are instructed to tithe; that is, to give a tenth of all we have and our increase. "Give and it shall be given you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal shall it be measured to you again" (Luke 6:38).

We can quote all the verses about tithing in the Bible, but until we put it into practice, it has no power. It is not my intent to flood you with various Scriptures. Instead, I want to tell you about an actual experience that shows what can happen when a church trusts and obeys God.

About 35 years ago, the Lost Creek, W.Va., SDB Church had a small budget of $7,000. Anyone can raise a $7,000 budget, you say.

The members struggled and came close to meeting their budget, but close only counts "in horse shoes and hand grenades." For several years, the church struggled to pay its bills and provide the pastor a decent salary.

At an annual business meeting, church finances were the major item on the agenda. This was during the time the denomination asked each church to give its pastor a 5% or more raise each year.

"You can't out-give God," one of the members said. "What we must do is tithe the church's income." Needless to say, this sparked another lengthy discussion.

One member suggested giving 5% to Our World Mission (OWM), the denominational budget. We knew that would require a more positive commitment on everyone's part. Then the member who suggested tithing our income spoke up.

"You people don't understand," he said. "We should give at least 25%, and that should be the first check written."

Once again, considerable discussion followed. As the members talked, support for the idea grew.

Finally, a motion was made that the Lost Creek church tithe its income to the denomination at the rate of 25%. It was seconded, and the motion passed.

"We have made a huge financial commitment, and each of us must increase our giving," the treasurer said. "Actually, we should each tithe our income so the church can meet its obligations."

The first month the 25% tithed was given, the treasurer almost had a heart attack. Where would the money come from? Yet each time a bill came in, there was a little extra in the collection plate to cover the expense.

At the end of the month, there was little or no money left, but the church had met all of its obligations. The next month was a little better. As the months passed, a surplus began to develop in the treasury.

Over the years since then, the church planned, repaired, and improved its entire facility. The church also increased its budget for spiritual materials and programs.

The congregation blacktopped its parking lot and driveway, replaced all the church's windows, and purchased a new organ and pews. It also built a new parsonage, which was paid for in only two years.

Then an education wing to the church that was first discussed in the early 1980s was brought to fruition in the 1980s. The $130,000 cost was paid in full 18 months later.

And yes, the church has given its pastor a 5% or higher raise each year.

If tithing can do this for a church, just think what it could do for you as an individual or family!

We personally started tithing as a result of our church's tithing program, and the Lord has richly blessed our family. We are not "rich" by the world's definition or standards, but we are extremely rich in the spirit life, living comfortably in the Christian world.

The Lord provides our every need. Note that I didn't say our every "want." But sometimes He even provides our wants.

I ask you; no, I encourage you—if you are not tithing, start now. Rework your budget and make tithing your number one priority. And pay it regularly. Tithing can work for you and your church.

In closing, I'd like to share an experience I had while visiting a church in Honolulu, Hawaii.

The church service was "normal" until it came time to receive the tithes and offerings. As the usher walked down the aisle to get the collection plates, the pastor announced in a loud voice, "The ushers are coming!" In unison, the congregation loudly responded, "Hallelujah!

"Why did the congregation respond with a loud hallelujah?" I asked someone after the service, unsure of its significance.

The answer was simple: "It is a real joy to give to the Lord, and we express that joy in praise. It reminds us to give a full measure of what the Lord has given to us."

If we are obedient to the Lord, we will tithe. And if we tithe, the Lord will bless us.

"Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over."—

Stan Allen is a deacon and former treasurer of the Lost Creek, W.Va., SDB Church, and has served as a denominational Memorial Board trustee.

April 1999
Preaching boldly about money
by Andrew Samuels
Pastor of the Miami, Fla., SDB Church

Many people say that they are not interested in "church" because churches are always asking for money. I became aware of this very early in my ministry. When you add that to my natural temperament, I was altogether reluctant to talk to my congregation about money.

Then the Lord convicted me. About eight years ago, I became convinced that the Lord expects us to declare to His people His whole counsel, and that includes issues of possessions, stewardship, and money. Therefore, I made a commitment to faithfully preach and teach on tithing and stewardship. And I have been doing that since then.

The results over the years—although noticeable in terms of the response of my congregation—had been, in my estimation, marginal. Although noticeable in terms of the area of stewardship closer to their potential.

First, I preached a series of sermons on stewardship. Then, when it came time for our Trustee Board to prayerfully recommend the budget for 1998, it set the budget 40% higher than the previous year. For 1998, our church exceeded its financial goals considerably, which meant an income of more than twice as much as the previous year. How did this happen? The number of tithers has increased, and many of those who were already tithing gave more. We declared one Sabbath in November "Double Tithe Sabbath," and ended up exceeding the double-tithe amount for three consecutive weeks. We added 16 new members during the year, and our average attendance increased by about 50%.

The Lord allowed us to purchase our own worship and ministry facilities in mid-1998, and this year I have been called to go from half-time to full-time ministry work. I have no doubt that our increased faithfulness has caused the Lord to give us increased responsibilities and privileges.

Having seen and experienced the blessings of faithful stewardship, we are committed to doing even better this year, as the Lord prospered us. I am no longer afraid to talk to my people about money. I preach about the issue boldly, with the Word of God as my basis. Then I expect the Holy Spirit to do the rest.

I became convinced that the Lord expects me to declare to His people His whole counsel, and that includes issues of possessions, stewardship, and money.

Practicing good stewardship

"Seeking Spiritual Maturity" in the area of stewardship brings a little chuckle for me on a personal level. In reading about the pitfalls of misuse, abuse, and over-use of credit cards, I would always think, "Yeah, that's easy for them to preach about. They don't have our budget to work with."

After two decades of struggling financially, Tim and I recently reached the enviable point of being able to pay cash for most purchases. Or at least pay our credit card bills promptly.

How have we been rewarded for our prudence? My personal Visa account was canceled from lack of use. Does that make sense? Tim encouraged me to apply for another card and to use it regularly. How times have changed!

Like our families, our SDB Women's Societies and Ladies Aids encounter two facets of stewardship: income of God's money and outgo of God's money. Highlights shared by eight groups described the following fund-raising activities:

- Sales—baked goods, crafts, rummage (occasional or an every Tuesday-afternoon "Opportunity Shop"), pizza kits.
- Annual Bazaar featuring food mixes, frozen casseroles, and cookie dough.

"A former pastor in a local (not SDB) church prohibited such fund-raisers on the grounds that "some of the money coming in might have come from gambling or other less-than-holy sources, and God wouldn't want to use that money."

"Think of what the women in that church have missed in terms of fellowship and satisfaction in working toward a goal and accomplishing it."

The same packet of highlights indicates that our women are generous in sharing the resources with which God has blessed them, including the following:

- Individuals—children going to camp and women going to Conference, White Christmas gifts and other special offerings for personal/family needs.
- Local church needs—church property, church mortgage, tableware and appliances in church kitchen, sanctuary flowers, church janitor's salary.

Other charitable organizations—Rural Concerns, Church Women United, blankets/cash for Church World Service, Lord's Acre Project, Baptist Women's Day of Prayer.

Those of us who have been blessed with children to "train up in the way they should go" have an obligation to teach them to practice good stewardship and to be "cheerful givers."

Do you require or encourage them to give a portion of their allowances to the Lord? Do they see you faithfully make a weekly or bi-weekly offering? Or is there some worldly goal that supercedes cheerful, faithful giving? (Ie. "when the car is paid for," "when Dad gets a better job," etc.).

Remember: our children will most likely not be under our influence when all of our material desires are acquired. What legacy of stewardship are we leaving for them?

Our women are generous in sharing the resources with which God has blessed them.
That pocketbook

by Una Dell

Scene No. I

Said farmer Brown to his good wife
As he came in from reaping,
"I'm blessed a heap in this 'ere life
With things that's worth the keeping.
My corn with plenty good
Is of the best 'A number one.'
As far as appearances show,
With things that's worth the keeping.

His wife had listened all the while,
But now in words of plainest style
She gave her thoughts. In accents plain
She spoke—she did not dare refrain.
"If you will think for a moment dear
Of how you have been blessed this year
In barley, oats, wheat, rye and hay,
Potatoes, corn (if frost will stay),
You'll see that you have quite forgot
From whom you took this garden spot:
A spot of nearly one mile square!
To use the farm which your poor wife
Has helped to earn with her own life!
Which God has given with its crops,
As good as heaven ever drops,
Just for yourself? and not a bill
For God or wife, who help you fill
That pocket-book you hold in hand,
Which holds the wealth from our land?"

cont. on page 26

That Pocket-book

by Una Dell

Scene No. I

Said farmer Brown to his good wife
As he came in from reaping,
"I'm blessed a heap in this 'ere life
With things that's worth the keeping.
My corn with plenty good
Is of the best 'A number one.'
As far as appearances show,
With things that's worth the keeping.

His wife had listened all the while,
But now in words of plainest style
She gave her thoughts. In accents plain
She spoke—she did not dare refrain.
"If you will think for a moment dear
Of how you have been blessed this year
In barley, oats, wheat, rye and hay,
Potatoes, corn (if frost will stay),
You'll see that you have quite forgot
From whom you took this garden spot:
A spot of nearly one mile square!
To use the farm which your poor wife
Has helped to earn with her own life!
Which God has given with its crops,
As good as heaven ever drops,
Just for yourself? and not a bill
For God or wife, who help you fill
That pocket-book you hold in hand,
Which holds the wealth from our land?"

cont. on page 26
It was exciting to once again visit the Philippines. I had not been there for several years, but I quickly noticed the changes that had occurred in Cebu City on the island of Cebu. There were more cars and not as many jeepneys (their equivalent of our city bus system). The hospitality and overall friendliness of the people had not changed, so it was an enjoyable time.

The purpose of the trip was to present a seminar on Seventh Day Baptist Polity and Beliefs. The leaders in the Philippines had asked me and Pastor Gabriel Bejjani (of the Riverside, Calif., SDB Church) to present the seminar.

The seminar was held all day Sunday in one of the conference rooms at the Cebu Plaza Hotel where we were staying. After discussing SDB polity and beliefs, Pastor Bejjani held a question and answer session. The meeting was profitable, creating a better understanding of our denomination's beliefs and polity.

Pastor Al Paypa had translated the tract, "A Baptist Church that's a Little Different," into Cebuano. During the seminar, he distributed the tract to the pastors, allowing them to see it in their own language. This made it more understandable.

Additional tracts and books will be translated and distributed. If funds are available, these items will also be used for outreach and education. The translation and printing of the first tract was made possible through donations which funded the Convention's computer and printer. Pastor Paypa prepared the tract.

It is exciting to see the results of donations sent for these types of projects. In many cases, there is no evidence that donated funds are being used. For instance, when we buy food, medicine, or other items, the end product is not always readily apparent.

The most exciting part of the meetings came toward the end of the seminar when Pastor E. Ferraren, the coordinator of the Conference, stated that he felt that the work of Seventh Day Baptists in the Philippines would be more effective if only one group existed, not two.

Up to this point, SDBs in the Philippines had been divided between the Conference and Convention, each with their own coordinator and organization. It often appeared that they were working against each other. Pastor Ferraren announced that he would step down as coordinator so that unity could be achieved. Everyone was pleased with his decision, and a new name was drafted and accepted. The Conference in the Philippines is now called "Seventh Day Baptist Philippines."

This move for unification was exciting to see the results of donations sent for these types of projects. In many cases, there is no evidence that donated funds are being used. For instance, when we buy food, medicine, or other items, the end product is not always readily apparent.

The most exciting part of the meetings came toward the end of the seminar when Pastor E. Ferraren, the coordinator of the Conference, stated that he felt that the work of Seventh Day Baptists in the Philippines would be more effective if only one group existed, not two.

Up to this point, SDBs in the Philippines had been divided between the Conference and Convention, each with their own coordinator and organization. It often appeared that they were working against each other. Pastor Ferraren announced that he would step down as coordinator so that unity could be achieved. Everyone was pleased with his decision, and a new name was drafted and accepted. The Conference in the Philippines is now called "Seventh Day Baptist Philippines."

This move for unification was exciting to see the results of donations sent for these types of projects. In many cases, there is no evidence that donated funds are being used. For instance, when we buy food, medicine, or other items, the end product is not always readily apparent.
Let us remember that any battle we face is not ours but the Lord’s. He fights for us and is always victorious. In Exodus 14:1-31, we find the people of Israel facing a life-death struggle with the all-powerful Pharaoh and his army. After 400 years of slavery, God’s promise to send a deliverer is realized in Moses. God chose Moses to deliver His message, “Thus says the Lord, God of Israel, let my people go!” So after 12 plagues (due to Pharaoh’s stubbornness), Pharaoh finally relents and lets them go. But after three days, he changes his mind. With fierce hatred, he decides to pursue the people of Israel, either to bring them back or destroy them.

Exodus 14:1-4 sets the scene. Israel is camped by the shore of the Red Sea. Pharaoh choses the best of his army and 600 of his choice chariots and pursues Israel, which is caught in an impossible situation: between the enemy and the sea.

God doesn’t want us to panic in the face of danger, but to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. God always gives His people a direction, and that is to go forward at all times. Going backwards or backsliding is NOT for us Christians. Why? Because God can perform wonders even from an impossible situation, providing you do not deviate from His Word and are obedient.

“All things are possible” under His control and dominion. Yes, even in our own struggles, for the battle belongs to the Lord! This is an awesome and powerful thought—to allow God to fight our battles, and for us to be still and witness His salvation.

As Children of God, we daily face inner and outer struggles. In Romans, chapters 7 and 8, the apostle Paul talks extensively about the inner struggle/battle we fight from within between our carnal, fleshly desires and our spiritual needs. This is the most dangerous of battles we face because the enemy is always close.

The other struggle we face is called “outer.” This involves the daily battles with spiritual foes, powers, and rulers of darkness that want to control our lives and lead us away from God and His love. But praise God, nothing can separate us from His love! The battle belongs to the Lord, and He always wins!

Brethren, we fight against a defeated foe, a fallen angel cast out of heaven, who shall one day be done away with and shall be no more (read Romans 8:38-39).

The rest of Exodus 14 shows the awesome salvation of the Lord. God fought the battle on Israel’s behalf and kept His promise: “The Egyptians you see today, you shall see no more!”

When God deals with a problem or situation, His solutions are final, and the problem ceases to exist.

Practical lessons for today’s Christians:
1) We are not exempt from daily battles, be it spiritual or carnal by nature.
2) We have a wonderful Heavenly Father who takes our struggles and makes them His.
3) God fights on our behalf.
4) We’re to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.
5) Hold your peace—for the Lord is in control.
6) “All things work together for good to them that love God…” (Romans 8:28).

This battle belongs to the Lord!

This article first appeared in The Link, newsletter of the Australasian SDB Conference.

The battle belongs to the Lord

by Gabriel Alegre

Name: Dale D. Thorngate
Birthdate and place: July 8, 1935
Battle Creek, Mich.
Current pastorate: Salem, W.Va., SDB Church
Family: Wife, Janet Marion (Van Horn); children, Helen-Catherine (James) Dingus, Dale D. Thorngate II (Cindy Bienemenderfer), and David M. Thorngate (Christina Boyd); and nine grandchildren.
Education:
-BS (Business Administration), St. Benedictine College, Atchison, Kan.
-MEd (Counseling), American University, Washington, D.C.
-DMiv (Theology), Methodist Theological School of Ohio, Delaware, Ohio.
-DMin (Church Development), Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, Lombard, Ill.
Former pastorate/employment:
-Chaplain Intern, Meriter Hospital, Madison, Wis.
-Pastor, First SDB Church, Columbus, Ohio
-Personnel Officer, Chief Warrant Officer, U.S. Army
-First Pastoral Conference of SDBs: Alton was also Executive Secretary for the World Federation and served as president of the General Conference.
-Duane Davis, former SDB pastor who also served as missionary to Jamaica and as president of the General Conference.
Favorite Bible passage: Jeremiah 29:11-14a
Favorite author: Theology: Augustine of Hippo
Spirituality: Elizabeth O’Connor
Leadership and management: Peter Drucker
Mystery: Colin Dexter
Most people don’t know (about me):
That I am a car nut!
When I have time, I enjoy: Singing: choir, quartet, men’s chorus; birdwatching, hiking, and driving my 1974 Volkswagen Bug.
A great answer to prayer was: God’s presence with me during my tour of duty in Vietnam.
A church project I’m excited about: Completing the new addition to our church building with its new parking lot, and the refocusing of our vision to expand God’s kingdom here in Salem through the ministry of our church.
My vision for SDBs: That we gain a new vision for growth and development in this country through the sharing of the “good news” of God’s love and compassion, as well as His direction for our lives. With the change of leadership at the denominational level, I am personally praying that God will send us leaders with a new vision for us as a people—a sense of direction that we all will be able to follow with enthusiasm and renewed energy.

When God deals with a problem or situation, His solutions are final, and the problem ceases to exist.
The President's Page

Eight great seminars

by Norma Rudert

Conference seminars offer an opportunity to discuss theological issues, learn new skills, sharpen old ones, and share ideas. Those who attend are enriched, enlightened, and possibly entertained. Previews of coming attractions at Hope College are summarized below.

• Special Needs Persons
  What do you envision when you hear these words? Close examination reveals that this label covers a broad spectrum of living conditions. Maybe there is someone fitting that description in your own congregation. In this seminar, you will gain better understanding of the "special needs" of these people and their families and learn how easy it is to be involved in a tangible ministry to them.

• What Church Treasurers Should Know—Learning and Sharing
  Steve is not a church treasurer, but he is a long-retired revenue agent and "somewhat" knows his way about government forms and publications. Since he is not computer literate, constructive input in this area by participants will be appreciated. -Rev. Christian Mattius, pastor of the SDB Church in North Loop, Neb.

• Presiding Over a Church Business Meeting
  One of the defining characteristics of Baptists is democratic decision-making in the local church. How can a church president or moderator help create harmony and minimize conflict? How should a church business meeting be organized? When are rules important and when do they get in the way? Come prepared to discuss particular problems and how best to deal with them. -James Skaggs, Conference Parliamentarian, par excellence.

• Becoming Whole and Holy
  This seminar for pastors' wives will focus on discovering biblical ways to share wholeness and holiness with each other. Areas to be explored will include mutual ministries of prayer, listening, and encouragement. -Rev. Melicent H. Vergeer, retired Presbyterian minister and wife of former Memorial Board Finance Manager John T. Vergeer.

• The Intentional Christian Family
  The family continues to be the basic unit of every society. This seminar includes a short history of the family in the United States and will discuss current issues, such as divorce, child abuse, and mobility. After developing the characteristics of the ideal Christian family, there will be time for discussion and reflection on our own individual experience. -Rev. Dale D. Thorngate, pastor of the SDB Church in Salem, Mass., and assistant professor of Marriage and Family Courses at Salem State University.

• What Church Treasurers Should Know—Learning and Sharing
  Steve is not a church treasurer, but he is a long-retired revenue agent and "somewhat" knows his way about government forms and publications. Since he is not computer literate, constructive input in this area by participants will be appreciated. -James Skaggs, Conference Parliamentarian, par excellence.

• The Fully-Gifted Creation Perspective
  One of the fundamental beliefs held by all Christians is that the universe is God's Creation. Everything that we are and everything that we see has its being as a gift of God. As creatures of God who are gifted with both intellect and curiosity, we often employ the natural sciences as a means of learning more about the Creation. In this seminar, we will reflect both on the heritage of Biblically-informed Christian thought and on some recent discoveries of the natural world, especially of astronomy. Recent photos from the Hubble Space Telescope will be included. -Dr. Howard J. Van Till, retired from the Physics faculty at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Mich., and author of The Fourth Day, among other publications.

• Watching the Intersection of Church and State
  The mission of the Baptist Joint Committee (BJC) is to defend God-given religious liberty for all, bringing a uniquely Baptist witness to the principle that religion must be freely exercised, neither advanced nor inhibited by government. Current church-state issues will be discussed, with ample opportunity for questions. -James M. Dunn, Executive Director, BJC.

• The Fully-Gifted Creation Perspective
  One of the fundamental beliefs held by all Christians is that the universe is God's Creation. Everything that we are and everything that we see has its being as a gift of God. As creatures of God who are gifted with both intellect and curiosity, we often employ the natural sciences as a means of learning more about the Creation. In this seminar, we will reflect both on the heritage of Biblically-informed Christian thought and on some recent discoveries of the natural world, especially of astronomy. Recent photos from the Hubble Space Telescope will be included. -Dr. Howard J. Van Till, retired from the Physics faculty at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Mich., and author of The Fourth Day, among other publications.

• Watching the Intersection of Church and State
  The mission of the Baptist Joint Committee (BJC) is to defend God-given religious liberty for all, bringing a uniquely Baptist witness to the principle that religion must be freely exercised, neither advanced nor inhibited by government. Current church-state issues will be discussed, with ample opportunity for questions. -James M. Dunn, Executive Director, BJC.

• The Fully-Gifted Creation Perspective
  One of the fundamental beliefs held by all Christians is that the universe is God's Creation. Everything that we are and everything that we see has its being as a gift of God. As creatures of God who are gifted with both intellect and curiosity, we often employ the natural sciences as a means of learning more about the Creation. In this seminar, we will reflect both on the heritage of Biblically-informed Christian thought and on some recent discoveries of the natural world, especially of astronomy. Recent photos from the Hubble Space Telescope will be included. -Dr. Howard J. Van Till, retired from the Physics faculty at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Mich., and author of The Fourth Day, among other publications.

• Watching the Intersection of Church and State
  The mission of the Baptist Joint Committee (BJC) is to defend God-given religious liberty for all, bringing a uniquely Baptist witness to the principle that religion must be freely exercised, neither advanced nor inhibited by government. Current church-state issues will be discussed, with ample opportunity for questions. -James M. Dunn, Executive Director, BJC.

• The Fully-Gifted Creation Perspective
  One of the fundamental beliefs held by all Christians is that the universe is God's Creation. Everything that we are and everything that we see has its being as a gift of God. As creatures of God who are gifted with both intellect and curiosity, we often employ the natural sciences as a means of learning more about the Creation. In this seminar, we will reflect both on the heritage of Biblically-informed Christian thought and on some recent discoveries of the natural world, especially of astronomy. Recent photos from the Hubble Space Telescope will be included. -Dr. Howard J. Van Till, retired from the Physics faculty at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Mich., and author of The Fourth Day, among other publications.

• Watching the Intersection of Church and State
  The mission of the Baptist Joint Committee (BJC) is to defend God-given religious liberty for all, bringing a uniquely Baptist witness to the principle that religion must be freely exercised, neither advanced nor inhibited by government. Current church-state issues will be discussed, with ample opportunity for questions. -James M. Dunn, Executive Director, BJC.

• The Fully-Gifted Creation Perspective
  One of the fundamental beliefs held by all Christians is that the universe is God's Creation. Everything that we are and everything that we see has its being as a gift of God. As creatures of God who are gifted with both intellect and curiosity, we often employ the natural sciences as a means of learning more about the Creation. In this seminar, we will reflect both on the heritage of Biblically-informed Christian thought and on some recent discoveries of the natural world, especially of astronomy. Recent photos from the Hubble Space Telescope will be included. -Dr. Howard J. Van Till, retired from the Physics faculty at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Mich., and author of The Fourth Day, among other publications.

• Watching the Intersection of Church and State
  The mission of the Baptist Joint Committee (BJC) is to defend God-given religious liberty for all, bringing a uniquely Baptist witness to the principle that religion must be freely exercised, neither advanced nor inhibited by government. Current church-state issues will be discussed, with ample opportunity for questions. -James M. Dunn, Executive Director, BJC.


The President's Page

Michigan SDBs prepare red carpet welcome!

From the Conference Host Committee

Conference President Norma Rudert and the White Cloud and Battle Creek churches are excitedly preparing a red carpet welcome for your arrival at General Conference August 1-7, 1999, in Holland, Michigan.

We would be most pleased to have you worship with us at either church: the Sabbath preceding Conference as well. White Cloud is 90 miles north of Holland, and Battle Creek is 65 miles south.

All those flying to Michigan should make reservations through to Kent County International Airport in Grand Rapids, 25 miles northeast of Holland. Ground transportation to Youth and Young Adult Pre-Con, and to Conference, will be available at specified times, courtesy of the Host Committee. Amtrak trains also service Holland very near the campus, so we will supply transportation from there.

If you drive to Conference, Holland is located right off Interstate 196. From I-94 in southern Michigan, near Benton Harbor, take I-196/US 31 north. Continue to Holland, going on US 31 when it splits from I-196 just south of Holland, past the Business I-196/US 31 exits, to 16th Street. Turn west one mile to College Street, and then north six blocks to the Hope College campus.

Parking is available in marked lots a short distance from the dorms. There is little on-street parking for the dorms, but we will have immediate parking for registration. There are only a few available parking spaces around any of the buildings, but all of our activities are very close to each other and on level ground.

Registration will occur in Phelps Hall, which also houses dorm rooms across the street, 300 feet from the cafeteria/meeting areas (Phelps/Mass Hall). These rooms in Cook Residence Hall have "two rooms, shared baths." Other non-air-conditioned rooms utilize dorm-style baths and are in Gilmore Hall, also across the street from Phelps/Mass Hall, and on the second floor of Phelps with an elevator available to our main floor activity sites. This is cont. next page
perfect for those who cannot walk comfortably.

Conference registration for the week is $45 for adults; children ages 5-11, $25. By the day, it's $7 and $4. Dorm-style rooms are $12 for adults and $5 for children, or $16 and $8 per day. Air-conditioned rooms which include semi-private baths are $175 for adults per week, and $87.50 for children per week. Per day, those prices are $25 and $12.50, respectively.

Your Host Committee

hopes SDBs will come from across the country to Michigan to fellowship, worship, learn, grow, and celebrate our wonderful Lord, Jesus Christ!

Meals are $122.30 for adults per week, $62.30 for children ages 5-11. By the day, meals are $17.75 and $8.90. Children under age 5 are free. Conference registration forms will be printed in the May Sabbath Recorder. Pre-registration is due by July 1, 1999. A surcharge will be assessed after that date.

For RV parking, we recommend the Double T Campground, which is only three miles from campus. Our liaison, Steve and Dixie Packard, are handling RV reservation information (724-356-8745). Daily rates for two people range from $15 (tents) to $20 (50 amp + water + sewage). Weekly rates are $78 and $120. Additional persons, 5 years or older, $1 each. A pool, rec room, basketball court, paddle boats, fishing, and modern baths and laundry facilities are available.

Youth Pre-Con will be at Camp Manitos 30 miles southwest of Battle Creek. Transportation will be furnished from there to Conference on Sunday, August 1.

Young Adult Pre-Con will be at Hope College in Cosmopolitan Hall, which is a short distance across campus from our other meeting sites. The young adults may choose to stay at the same hall during Conference week and enjoy continued fellowship and the convenience of only one unpacking.

Children's Conference during Conference week will be coordinated by Christine Davis and held in the lower level of Dimnent Chapel. Children will be escorted daily from the Phelps Hall cafeteria to their conferences, then back again to Phelps for meals. Nightly they will enjoy a campfire-type program in the Pine Grove outside Dimnent Chapel while the adults have evening worship.

The nursery for our youngest children is conveniently located in the lower level of Phelps Hall.

Each month President Norma Rudert has been challenging us to learn more about the implications of 1 Peter 2:11, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." Your Host Committee hopes SDBs will come from across the country to Michigan to fellowship, worship, learn, grow, and celebrate our wonderful Lord, Jesus Christ!

Update from Durango

Greetings from Bayfield, Colo. We are the Howards that appeared in the January issue of the SR, meeting with Pastor L.B. Lee. We felt a great burden to fill you all in on what has been happening since that meeting.

About three years ago, we were politely asked to leave the Baptist church that we had been attending because we were bringing up questions about the Sabbath. One night, the Good Lord revealed the Sabbath to us as only He can do with His great power and truth. What a revelation! We felt as though we had been set free.

Our little family was at home now, worshipping alone, which was a blessing in itself as God forced us to dig for ourselves. But we did miss the fellowship of like-minded believers. Eventually, an elderly lady from our former church joined us, and then another couple. That is when Pastor Lee and his beautiful family came for a weekend visit and offered his services for an afternoon Bible study on the Sabbath.

Prior to his visit, we sent out many invitations. Only two families from other churches joined our little group, but it was a fantastic study and Pastor Lee did a great job. He was kind and loving towards our Sunday keepers.

That was in October of 1998. Since then, we have grown by four families, adding 13 more people, with a family occasionally visiting us from Canyon City, Colo.

When we are together, there are 24 people sitting around living rooms praising and worshipping the Lord. One of the families that has recently joined us was one that came to listen to Pastor Lee's Bible study. The hand of God is truly at work in our little community.

We come from a mixture of backgrounds, but all agree that salvation is by grace through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Bible is the only inspired Word of God which is our authority over our daily lives.

We would like to extend an open invitation to any traveling souls that come through or near Durango in southwest Colorado. Our worship service begins on Sabbath morning around 10:30 with singing and praise. Since more than half of our congregation is under the age of 12, we involve the little ones with stories and special songs. We break around 12:30 for a great potluck meal and fellowship, and then continue in a Bible study.

For more information about our meetings, please contact Pastor L.B. Lee at the Colorado Springs Seventh Day Baptist Church, (719) 546-1058. God bless!

Lovingly in Christ's name,

Vickie and Jay Howard

SR Reaction

Dear Editor Butler,

Enclosed is a check for $66, which represents the number of years the SR has been in our home. We celebrated our 66th anniversary on September 7, 1999, so this is well into our 66th year of good denominational news!

I notice the '98 giving is under-subscribed. I tried to push it back a little last year by sending a silly little Valentine rhyme, plus the suggested $14. Now this February 14th will come from across the country to Michigan to fellowship, worship, learn, grow, and celebrate our wonderful Lord, Jesus Christ!

Dear Kevin,
The reference in the February issue to my salvation testimony last year raised a question in my mind: are you not printing more testimonies because there is no room in the magazine? Or are you not including them because your readers have not responded to the invitation to share their testimonies?

Perhaps our esteemed evangelist, Loyal Hurley, spoke the truth when he remarked to me some 35 years ago, "Too many SDB churches have the Sabbath, but don't have another blessed thing." If our people cannot speak up with confidence about their salvation and relate to others what Jesus Christ has done in their lives, there is no point to any part of the church's ministry—from worship services, to camps, to missions, or to any denominational program. The experience of having been born again, of having put off the "old self" and taken on new life in Jesus, is what it's all about. We should never be reluctant or embarrassed to speak up for the Lord!

I urge your readers to share what Jesus has done for them. This is part of exhorting and encouraging one another in the Lord.

Linda Hays
Chatawa, MS

Editor's note: Space has not been the problem. It seems that not too many people are writing much of anything these days—even by e-mail. Plus, we have not been consistent in asking for the testimonies. Thank you, Linda, for doing it so well.

April 1999/ 23
Obituaries, continued

Gideon International for many years. Along with his wife, he conducted services on a regular basis for over 35 years at the Bowery Mission in New York City.

Survivors include his wife of 48 years, Shirley (Reinhart) Bakker; one daughter, Carol J. Robertson of Houston, Texas; and three grandchildren. He was predeceased by an infant daughter, Mary Flemas, in 1958; and by one sister, Lammeciena Thompson.

Services were held on November 13, 1998, at the Plainfield SDB Church. Interment was at Hillside Cemetery in Scotch Plains.


He was born in Rotterdam, Netherlands, on June 16, 1907, the son of Jacob F. and Geoemina (Schauw) Bakker. The family came to the United States in 1912. He lived in Plainfield before moving to Scotch Plains, N.J., in 1917.

Mr. Bakker received a bachelor’s degree in history and German from Alfred (N.Y.) University in 1929, and a J.D. from New York University School of Law in 1932. He was admitted to the bar in 1934, and was employed as a counselor at law in Plainfield for 58 years, retiring in 1992. He was a member of the Plainfield Bar Association and the New Jersey State Bar Association. He also served in the U.S. Army during World War II for three and a half years.

Mr. Bakker was baptized and joined the Plainfield Seventh Day Baptist Church in 1923. He became very active in the church, leading its Christian Endeavor Society and teaching Sabbath School. He was ordained a deacon in 1949. He held various offices in denominational agencies, including the SDB Historical Society, Memorial Board, and the Tract Society.

He was a member of The Christian Business Men’s Committee and The

Lamoreaux.—Jrrl Orrell Lamoreaux, 54, of Kiallo, Calif., died of a massive brain hemorrhage on November 10, 1998, at Redwood City, Calif.

Born on February 21, 1944, in San Bernardino, Calif., he graduated from Eisenhower High School in 1962, and from Cal State—San Bernardino in 1976. He worked as an engineering technician for the Public Works Department of the City of Riverside, Calif., for 20 years.

Jerry attended the Riverside Seventh Day Baptist Church since 1968. His wife of 30 years, Diana (Boat­ man) Lamoreaux, survives.

Other survivors include two daughters, Aimee Wilson of Kiallo, and Mandy Henry of Janesville, Wis.; three sisters, Virginia Schwoebel, and Mandy Henry of Janesville, Wis.; and many nieces and nephews.

Services were held on November 17, 1998, at the Riverside Seventh Day Baptist Church, with Pastor Gabriel Bejjani officiating. Burial was in Crestlawn Memorial Park, Riverside.

Mendiola.—Terry (Chepan) Mendiola of Bakersfield, Calif., went to be with her Lord on December 11, 1998.

Terry was a member of the Riverside, Calif., Seventh Day Baptist Church.

Survivors include her husband, Joseph, and one daughter, Jaime Mendiola, both of Bakersfield; two brothers, Robert and Donald; one sister, Jewell, and numerous relatives.

A memorial service was held on December 19, 1998, at the Riverside SDB Church, with Rev. Gabriel Bejjani officiating.

Stutler.—Wilbur A. Stutler, 86, of Shinnston, W.Va., died on December 30, 1998, in the Unit­ ed Hospital Center, Clarksburg, W.Va.

He was born on October 29, 1912, in Salem, W.Va., the son of Oris O. and Velma (Bond) Stutler. He was a 1935 graduate of Salem College, and retired from the Beulah Corporation in Maryland after working 32 years as an engineer.

Wilbur had been a member of the Seventh Day Baptist Church since his baptism in 1924.

Survivors include one sister, Juanita Zweibel of Boulder, Colo.; two half-sisters, and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his wife, Mary C. (McCart­ ney) Stutler.

Orr.—Earl Leroy Orr, 85, of Up­ land, Calif., died of heart disease on January 27, 1999, at his home.

Earl was born in Yellow Jacket, Colo., on March 20, 1917, and lived in Rivera­ side, Calif., for 15 years before moving in 1930. He lived in Upland the past 14 years. He served in the U.S. Army Air Force during World War II, and worked as a building contractor for 50 years.

Earl was a member of the River­ side Seventh Day Baptist Church. He was on the church’s Building Com­ mittee and worked with the Pacific Pines Church Camp in Crestline, Calif. He enjoyed fishing, camping, traveling, and boating.

Survivors include his wife, Vir­ ginia; one daughter, Janette Haidet of Osos, Calif.; one son, Brian, of Riverside; three brothers, Kenneth of Whitter, Calif., Louis of San Ber­ nardino, Calif., and Loyd of Ste­ vensville, Mont.; two sisters, Ruth Schafer of Las Vegas, Nev., and Mildred Stansberry of Vista, Calif.; five grandchildren, one great­ granddaughter, and many nieces and nephews.

Services were held on January 30, 1999, at the Riverside SDB Church, with Revs. Richard Howard and Gabriel Bejjani officiating. Inter­ ment was in Olivewood Memorial Park, Riverside.

Perrin.—Clifford E. Perrin Jr., 79, of Ashaway, R.I., died at home on February 14, 1999.

He was born on December 4, 1919, in Ashaway, the son of Clifford E. and Annie (McNab) Perrin Sr. He graduated from Westerly (R.I.) High School and the School of Diesel Engineer­ing. He was an Eagle Scout and served as a scoutmaster in Ashaway for 11 years.

On November 27, 1948, he mar­ ried Eileen Champlin in Westerly. Clifford served as an Army diesel technician with the Coast Artillery, 243rd Division, during World War II. He attained the rank of technical sergeant and was a first class gunner before being discharged. He received the Good Conduct Medal, American Theater Campaign Ribbon, and Victory Medal, and attended Coast Artillery School in Fort Monroe, Va.

Clifford owned and operated plumbing and heating businesses in Rhode Island and Connecticut for many years. He had been a member of the First Hopkinson Seventh Day Baptist Church in Ashaway since 1933.

In addition to his wife of 50 years, he leaves two daughters, Brenda P. Stone of Stockbridge, Ga., and Lorna P. Sabin of McDonough, Ga.; seven grandchildren, and two great­ grandchildren.

Private funeral services were held at the R.I. Veterans Cemetery in Exeter, with Rev. Henry Pendleton officiating.

April 1999/ 25

Church Leaders

Last call to make your suggestions for the new Manual of Procedures. (The proposed copy was sent to every church last fall.)

Current Giving 1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Giving for Year</th>
<th>$5,416.80</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Giving for 1999</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Giving Budget for 1999</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Go to Jamaica? Ya, mon!

Last month, Gem Fitz-Henley asked for dollar contributions to help our brethren in Jamaica complete the big job at the Maiden Hall Conference Center. Now they are asking for you—your hands, your energy, your dedication, your love for the brethren—to go to Jamaica in order to reach their goal of a completed building.

Please don't read this and say "I can't!" Everybody and anybody can help, no matter what your skills. You really can help and your life will make a difference at this tremendous missionary project. Let us know that you are interested. We will get back in touch with all of the details as to time and etc.

God cared enough to send His very best. Please care enough to go to Jamaica for a week or two weeks or more.

Our purse, 'tis true, is rather thin For there is not a bill within; But, praise the Lord—I'll see it grow. And then, if my own heart I know, The wife can have some needful things (For she gives labor golden wings) And when she thinks a dime should go To worthy objects here below, She has the right to use her pleasure, And take a handful from the measure To strew upon the land of need Where others want, and others feed. And the dear Lord shall have his share, His box just now is rather bare. A dollar out of every ten Must go to him who gives to men Each blessing from the time they're born Until he doth each head adorn With crowns of everlasting life. I hope he'll favor me and wife! 

Kevin's Corner

Last year, I planned (and dreaded) to preach a series of messages on stewardship. Yes, money-talk from the pulpit! I probably felt like Andy Samuels in his early days of ministry (see page 12).

As the series approached, I felt more confident about the topic, realizing that stewardship is much more than money. Yet at the same time, I felt uncomfortable mentioning "the m-word" since it is such a personal matter for us Americans. Money—and giving it away—is also a matter of spiritual maturity. That's why the Coordinating Leadership Team, in cooperation with our boards and agencies, has included stewardship in our annual "Seeking Spiritual Maturity" emphasis.

How do we become cheerful givers like Linda Graffius? (Please don't miss this month's first two features.) She has become downright evangelistic when it comes to the joy of giving.

Here's a thought: D. Wade Armstrong once said that the believer who would be evangelistic in thought and action must make available to the Lord all that he is and has. "All ten talents should be acknowledged as belonging to the Lord. One tenth should be dedicated as holy to Him (see Lev. 27:30)."

"After this action by faith and love, the Christian is free to ask his Lord for the leading of the Holy Spirit to ascertain how much his offerings should be to the work of the kingdom." If we dare to step out on faith and dedicate all that we have as belonging to God—along with a decision to use it to help others come to know Him—then we can be unusually used and blessed by the Lord. But can we do that cheerfully?

2 Corinthians 9:7 says, "Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." What have you decided "in your heart" to give? Have you ever seen big gifts presented in such a staged way that it makes you wonder about the heart of the giver? The Lord is saying that inner purpose is as important as outer deed. Another person with a smaller gift may be giving all they have out of a huge, loving heart. Finding new spiritual maturity through our use of money means discovering the right purpose in our hearts. The need of the giver to give is even more important than the outward gift.

"Each man should give..." This is an "avenue" to happiness, a way toward the goal of being a "cheerful giver." Happiness really is through giving, not through getting.

Remember the story of King Midas? He felt that his life would be complete if everything he touched became gold. Well, everything he touched did turn to gold, including his food, his bed, and so on. His riches made life impossible. There was no happiness in getting! "Not reluctantly or under compulsion." Isn't Christian giving a spiritual opportunity? How God must smile (a bit sadly I'm sure) as He watches us labor and struggle to make a contribution to the church. Why can't we remember: "we good it feels whenever we do a generous deed?"

Why not make the decision to be generous, once and for all? If we set aside for God the first tenth of all we receive, we will always be free to give to the church and to charity. And even be happy about it!

Why does God love a cheerful giver? Because He Himself is a cheerful giver. And like our Conference theme this year, the Lord invites us to be like Him.

Lowell Atkinson writes about this giving spirit: "God has marked out for us the way of generosity, flinging away his life upon a cross, breaking himself in the sacrifice of love to achieve the mighty ministry of salvation, giving himself when we were not worthy of it."

To give is to live! Our gifts show forth our love for a giving God. How much love do your gifts show forth?
"Life in All its Fullness"

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the American Bible Society (ABS) has produced this 80-page booklet for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

Foundational Scripture passages dealing with essential human rights have been collected in 12 categories, making the booklet easy to use in your church or Bible study group. A study guide with chapter questions is included, along with the full text of the Universal Declaration.

As stated in the introduction, "Each of the twelve categories reflects the fact that we are all equally beneficiaries of God's gifts of creation and grace, and share a responsibility to lead ethical lives and work together for human rights and liberties for all."

The Seventh Day Baptist Center has a limited number of these free ABS booklets available. For single copies, we suggest sending one dollar to cover postage and handling. For higher quantities, please contact us.