Seeing the Unseen Christ

How His Presence Transforms Life
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 day of worship. We observe the seventh day of the week (Saturday) as God's Holy Day as an act of loving obedience—not as a means of salvation.

The seventh day

Dr. Paul Manuel

"See the Unseen Jesus" with 50-Day material

Intrigued by this month's theme? More items to help you see Jesus include an Adventure journal and a guidebook, "The Unseen Guest." To order your resources, call 1-800-224-2735 (U.S.) or 1-800-461-4114 (Canada). Or write, Mainstay Church Resources, Box 30, Wheaton IL 60189-0030.

Robe of Achievement nominations

★★★

The SDB Women's Society is accepting nominations for the Robe of Achievement for 2001. Please be considering a woman in your church who meets these criteria for nomination:

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

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 resubmit the name as well as the résumé.

Send all nominations to:

Rowena Van Horn
209 First Avenue
Daytona Beach FL 32114

Deadline: March 31, 2001

Pastors' Conference 2001

April 17-21
Alfred Station, NY

with instructors
Dr. William Brackney
(Church history)
Dr. Paul Manuel
(Biblical interpretation)
Inviting the unseen Christ to church

by David Mains

Editor's note: The material in this month’s feature section comes from Mainstay Resources and their 50-Day Spiritual Adventure called, "Seeing the Unseen Christ: How His Presence Transforms Life." To order Adventure journals and guidebooks, see inside front cover.

What if the Lord Jesus Christ actually came to our church as other visitors do, with no publicity, no sensationalism? Merely word of mouth. How would people have in arriving late for worship noticed? What’s the difference? How would Scripture readers and ushers do their work sensing the privilege of helping worshipers adore Christ? Aid soloists and choir members to rehearse well and to do their best to merit his approval. Be near those who speak words on Christ’s behalf. May we be conscious of the importance of saying what our Lord himself would say if he chose to do the preaching?

Is this just imaginary thinking? If a given congregation received proof that Christ had bodily returned and was going to their church, everyone would say, “I’m going to do my job. It’s no burden at all. It’s the very least I can do. The King is going to be present, you know.” Am I then unrealistic to expect the same when Christ comes in his Spirit?

If I told you Christ wouldn’t be here during this special Adventure, my words would be bereft—because he is present and will be. Since Christ graces our church services by his Spirit, am I therefore wrong to suggest that we view this as a most unique privilege—not one to be taken lightly? I am challenging all of us to fix our minds on the amazing truth that Christ is in the midst of his Church.

How would we respond? Were Christ to make himself bodily visible, probably our first response would be to bow before him. Some of you would kneel. These actions are the body language of worship. To worship is to adore, laud, and magnify the name of our Lord.

By the time you get to chapter 17 in the Book of Matthew, the disciples had become a bit accustomed to Christ. True, he did miracles, and that set him apart. But in many ways, he probably started to seem very human.

Chapter 17 begins with Christ leading Peter, James, and John to a high mountain. “There he was transfigured before them,” reads the text. Listen to these words: “His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light.”

You can’t look at the sun very long, can you? It’s too bright. That’s what Christ’s face was like. That’s not all. “There appeared before them a figure of Moses and Elijah, great figures from their national past. They had come from the other world to speak with this man who was their leader.” A bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!” When the disciples heard this, they fell face-down to the ground, terrified. Their actions were saying, “We’re not worthy to be here. You are someone who causes us to be filled with awe. We’re frightened.”

Knowing their reaction, Jesus said in verse 7, “Don’t be afraid.” Then they looked up and saw no one except the Lord.

Possibly we have grown a little too accustomed to our Lord. We need to be struck anew by the wonder of who he is. We need to see in him our Lord and be constantly aware of his presence in our lives.

Get ready to worship

Worship needs to be our response, just as it was the response of the disciples. Of one of the ways the Church worships is through music. This worship music could be old hymns addressed to God, focusing on His attributes. Maybe it’s modern choruses, the simple love songs that say to Christ, “We adore you; we come and lay our lives before you.”

Worship can be expressed corporately when we meet together as a body, or individually throughout the week. But it needs to be meaningful worship every week. The Adult and Student Journals suggest about a dozen simple ways to prepare yourself. For example, “Get rid of things that might keep you from focusing on the unseen Christ during the worship service.”

Each week you are to choose one of these suggested worship activities. Through this simple action step you should come to church with a spirit of anticipation rather than with your mind focused elsewhere. I believe this discipline will be beneficial for all of us. [See “Tennis, anyone?” on page 13.]

The preaching themes during this series will center on how seeing the unseen Christ in our midst transforms our lives. For example, when we practice the presence of Christ, we
are led to lavish his love on others. Our Lord will insist on it. You know that’s correct. It’s consistent with what Scripture teaches.

Action Step 2 will give us a practical way to care for one another. Each week you are to show Christ’s love through secret acts of kindness.

When we practice the presence of Christ, we’ll want to live righteously. With him among us, we will be aware of sin and embarrassed when we fall prey to temptation. So another of the five action steps, number three, relates to reversing a self-destructive pattern.

Bring on the revival

The presence of Christ is the outstanding characteristic of all times of authentic revival. During such periods of awakening in the Church, it’s as though the veil that normally hides the Lord is drawn back and people see him, not totally, but more. Hides the Lord is drawn back and people see him, not totally, but more.

Worship has consistently marked past times of revival in the Church. Here’s an example from C.L. Culpepper’s book, The Shantung Revival.

Another result of the revival [Shantung, China, 1922-33] was a continual singing of the people. They put songs and other scriptures to music. Old people who could not read or write memorized the songs and sang with their eyes closed, their bodies swaying to the rhythm of the melody and tears of joy running down their cheeks.

God had taken away their sorrow and given them a new song. I saw that many old women who could not carry a tune were filled with the Spirit, singing a melody that seemed to come from an angel of heaven.

One of the greatest personal blessings which I received from the revival was the wonderful singer in the worship services. Entire congregations bowed in silent meditation for several minutes, and the atmosphere became charged with spiritual power. Suddenly someone would begin to pray and praise God. As long as an hour would pass before the speaker would speak. Conviction became so evident that the preacher would simply give an opportunity for anyone who wished to accept Christ to come forward, and there was always some response, often in large groups. I knew it was the natural result of a spirit of worship and adoration which followed revival.

The ordinances also became more meaningful. One missionary commented, “I was never so blessed in my life as when taking the Lord’s Supper with Spirit-filled Chinese brothers and sisters in Christ.”

It was not unusual to see people in tears during the observance. As one young widow told a missionary, “My eyes were streaming tears all the time. It wasn’t that I was sad or glad; it was simply that I was broken before the Lord.”

Baptism took on new meaning. Unbelievers, witnessing the baptisms, often came under deep conviction. Invitations were frequently given and conversions resulted. I realized I had never fully understood the meaning of worship until I saw the Spirit of God renewing the hearts of His people.

My prayer is that we will be touched in a special way by the same Lord, and that we will know revival in our churches as well. May it be so.

Dr. David R. Mais is CEO of Mainstay Resources, Wheaton, Ill.


In 1 Peter 4:8-11, the apostle Peter addresses the subject of how we should live until Christ returns. By his words, “The end of all things is near” (4:7), Peter directs our eyes toward the coming, unseen Christ and urges us to behave as if we could literally see him in our midst right now.

Lucas, Spielberg and Stallone—watch out! The sequel of all the centuries is coming soon! No, it’s not Rocky XII or Superman IX nov... Jesus 3-D. It’s not even another returning Idol... it’s The Return of Jesus!

“This full-length spectacular is guaranteed to break all box-office records (actually, it’ll break all box offices). This sequel isn’t reel fiction, it’s real truth. It was scripted, cast, directed and produced by the Creator Himself, and no one can match His special effects!

“The Messiah is coming again, and everyone will see him. If you missed the first coming, don’t miss the second. There won’t be a third.”

[Adapted from a tract by Susan Perlman, “The Sequel to End All Sequels,” Jews for Jesus.]

Yes, Jesus Christ is coming again, and everyone will see him. When that happens, things won’t be the same. What if it were possible to see the unseen Christ now? What changes would take place in our church and in our lives? Believers would begin to worship him with genuine enthusiasm, lavish his love on others, and embrace righteousness and renounce evil.

The gist of Peter’s word to us in the next few verses is that when churches see the unseen Christ, believers will serve him with gratitude and eagerness. Let’s look at some of the transformations that this captivating vision of Christ will make in our church.

When we see the unseen Christ, we’ll serve him with intense love for others (4:8). We will love “deeply.” That word means to stretch or strain. It’s a love that reaches out like a runner stretching to break the tape. The idea is of strenuous, intense activity.

Paul defined love as keeping “no record of wrongs” (1 Cor. 13:5). One writer shares, “We bear with each other because we know our own failings... To cover a multitude calls for a greater strain than to cover a few.”

I recall an early ministry experience when I was paired with another single guy to share an apartment. We were of opposite personalities, so I began to pray that God would “stand off” any potential sharp edges to our relationship and produce love in my heart, even before we were together.

As my intense prayers continued through the weeks, I grew in respect for my roommate.
and love, and truly experienced Peter's point in this verse.

Close your eyes and look at Jesus for a moment. Who is he bringing to your mind that needs your fervent love? Ask Jesus what he wants you to do about it.

**When we see the unseen Christ, we will gladly practice hospitality (4:9).**

We should literally, "love strangers", in this case, Christian strangers ("one another").

In Peter’s day, many were cut off from their families by persecution. Many believers were traveling evangelists, and the only inns were filthy and dangerous.

Peter qualifies the love: "without complaint"—no grumbling, murmuring. A mark of a serving church is its hospitality. A Wycliffe missionary wrote, "When I was first married, I equated hospitality (4:9)."

Christ, we will gladly practice hospitality (4:9).

When we serve, we are good stewards of his manifold (many-colored, every color of grace to fit every color of need) grace. Whether we serve with speaking gifts or serving gifts, God supplies what is required, so the glory will be His.

As we become more aware of Christ among us (as we see the unseen Christ), this captivating vision will transform us into a body that serves him with gratitude and eagerness.

Care is right between prayer and share and is so important. It might mean sending a note of encouragement, shoveling someone's driveway, or sharing some of the produce from your garden or a loaf of fresh-baked bread. You might offer to take an elderly friend to the doctor, offer to baby-sit for a young couple who desperately needs a night out, or volunteer to help a co-worker complete a task.

The opportunities are endless, and the unseen Christ will reveal them to us as we let him take control of our lives.

Jean Frederic Oberlin, a minister in 18th century Germany, was traveling by foot in winter when he was caught in a severe snowstorm. He soon lost his way in the blowing snow and feared he would freeze to death.

Whether we serve with speaking gifts or serving gifts, God supplies what is required, so the glory will be His.

**Prayer that pleases God**

by Roger D. Haber

Whenever you answer the phone and there’s too much silence, I know a computer has dialed my number and I am about to talk with a telemarketer.

Now, I’m sure telemarketers are wonderful people, just doing their job. But they seem to always call when I’m having dinner with the family. I usually hang up.

I really don’t listen to telemarketers.

However, when someone I know and love calls, I drop everything and listen intently.

What happens when you "call" God? Does He hang up?

Does He say, "Not interested"? Or does He know someone has called who knows and loves Him? Does He listen intently?

Let’s look at Luke 18:9-14, and see how the unseen Christ responded to the prayers of two people. One prayed words; the other prayed a heart prayer that pleased God.

**Prayer that pleases God has very little to do with religious position or experience.**

The Pharisee was a religious man. He knew God's Word. He just didn't know God.

In despair he sat down, not knowing which way to turn. Just then, a man came along in a wagon and rescued Oberlin. He took him to the next village and made sure he would be cared for.

As the man prepared to journey on, Oberlin said, "Tell me your name so that I may at least have you in grateful remembrance before God."

The man, who by now had recognized Oberlin, replied, "You are a minister. Please tell me the name of the Good Samaritan."

Oberlin said, "I cannot do that, for it is not given in the Scriptures." His benefactor responded, "Until you can tell me his name, please permit me to withhold mine."

Serve the Lord and others with gratitude and eagerness. Dr. John White serves as Director of Foundation Development at Mainstay Ministries, Wheaton, Ill.

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**What happens when you "call" God? Does He hang up?**

**Does He say, "Not interested"?**

**Or does He know someone has called who knows and loves Him?**

**Does He listen intently?**

He behaved correctly. He just didn't believe correctly.

He was a proud, arrogant man. He didn't sin (so he thought). He fasted and tithed.

His problem: He didn't have authentic prayer, and God ignored his empty words.

**Prayer that pleases God has very much to do with the heart and attitude.**

The tax collector was most likely dishonest, despised, and dejected. One wonders what he was doing at the temple anyway.
It is October 14th, and the sun is reflecting mirages of water on an Air Force base runway in southern Florida.

The silence of the scene is interrupted as a long-winged plane touches down on the runway and taxis to the hanger. A thousand planes a day go through this same routine, but this one plane's payload is different from all the others.

Its payload is just a few rolls of film, but the information on that film would shape the events of the world. It could shift the balance of power in the world.

The film is transported to a top-secret laboratory and developed. It is then sent to the Pentagon and on to an Airl Force base runway in southern Florida.

**Brinkmanship is the willingness to expose oneself to risk, to press the limits of safety for a cause. It is walking the tightrope of disaster.**

**Immensely decision**

The year is 1962, and a young president, John F. Kennedy, just 44 years old, sits at the desk. The decision he makes moves the armies of the most powerful nation in the world. The crisis he faces is one of immense proportions. The president said, "This secret, swift, extraordinary buildup of weapons and air blockade of Cuba. Premier Khrushchev decided he would test this young president's fabrication. He would confront the standard of our convictions. The Soviet ships sailed on toward Cuba.

The film is reflecting mirages of water on the planes a day go through this same film, but the information on that film would shape the events of the world. It could shift the balance of power in the world.

**A game of “chicken”**

As kids we played a little game. We called it "chicken." The object was to see who would "flinch" when challenged.

In national politics, you call it "brinkmanship." Brinkmanship is the willingness to expose oneself to risk, to press the limits of safety for a cause. It is walking the tightrope of disaster.

The Soviets were going to press the boundary, walk the line, and see just how much they could get away with.

**Spiritual brinkmanship**

This incident in world history has a living parallel in our daily lives. Many are involved in a dangerous game of spiritual brinkmanship.

Throughout Scripture, and in various ways, God says, "Be holy as I am holy."

First John has something to say to those of us who want to practice spiritual brinkmanship. 1 John 1:5-7 helps us to reverse a self-destructive pattern.

The final result of walking in the light is most precious. Verse 7b says, "And the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. It is this fact that makes us holy before God."

**True freedom**

It is exciting to be able to have a vitality that exists when we feel the freedom of souls that are free of sin—free of encumbrance, free of guilt, free of condemnation—all because we believe in the power of the blood that was shed at Calvary.

In the words of Robert Lowry's hymn (written in the 1860s) we can feel the real sense of joy and elation:

> What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

> What can make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

> Oh precious is the flow, That makes me white as snow.

Have you been playing the game of spiritual brinkmanship, walking the tightrope of disaster?
Do you enjoy a stick of chewing gum from time to time? I do, particularly when I'm traveling. Chewing gum offers a quick, refreshing break for people on the go.

The sweet taste lasts but a few minutes, and then it's gone. It refreshes the mouth, but it doesn't sustain us for the long haul. It is flavorful but not filling.

Unfortunately, as Christians, we often handle God's Word like we do chewing gum. We come to the Word for something new, something sweet we can enjoy for a while. Then when the newness wears off, we discard it and look for something else.

Instead of allowing the Word to change us, we simply want the newness to wear off, we discard it and look for something else.

**We come to the Word for something new, something sweet we can enjoy for a while. Then when the newness wears off, we discard it and look for something else.**

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**Tennis, anyone?**

Think sports for a moment.... Pick a sport you enjoy playing. Any sport will do, but let’s suppose that you are an enthusiastic tennis player.

Imagine this scenario: It’s Monday. At 4:30 p.m. you dash out of your office door to the car, rev it up and move it out to join the thundering herd heading homeward.

You, however, are going to make a lifestyle difference from the herd. You are going to stop for exercise on the way home.

As you navigate traffic, you’re taking off your tie. At one stoplight, you slip off your black leather shoes. At the next one, on go the white tennis shoes.

By the time you swoop down into the tennis court parking lot (going about 45 mph), a metamorphosis has taken place. You’re dressed like a lean, mean tennis pro!

But your mind is still back at the office. You jog over to the court, greet your partner, skip the warm-up, break out a new can of balls, elect to serve first, and begin the match immediately.

What happens to your game when you approach it this way? Disaster! Your feet are sluggish, your eyes are unfocused, and your mind is still wandering just like your tennis balls, which are spraying everywhere but between those little white lines.

Has your approach to corporate worship been at all similar to that? Determined to make a lifestyle difference you dash to church for a hour or two of worship. Beforehand, you and your spouse have a mild lack of agreement. The kids, up late the night before, are slow and cranky.

Late and agitated, you swoop into the church parking lot, run to church, try to resolve your spousal disagreement in subdued voices underneath the organ prelude—and then you wonder why your mind wanders throughout the service.

As in sports, worship is a discipline in which there are not substitutes for time and practice. To be any good at it, we need to take time to prepare with our whole being—body, mind, soul.

—John Garmo, Lifestyle Worship
Thomas Nelson, 1993, pp. 158-159

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**Listening that makes a difference (v. 23)**

Listening that makes a difference is listening based on looking closely at the mirror of God’s Word and doing what it says. This passage says that when we do this, freedom and blessing will be ours.

The author of The Cloud of Un-knowing, a Christian classic, says it this way:

In this context, God’s Word whether written or spoken may be compared to a mirror. Spiritually, the eyes of your soul are your reason, and your consciousness is your spiritual face. And just as it is so that if you have a dirty spot on your physical face your eyes cannot see that spot nor know where it is without a mirror or someone else to tell you so; so it is spiritually in the same way that without reading or hearing God’s Word it is not possible for a soul blinded by habitual sin to see the foul spot upon his consciousness.

Are you working on reversing a self-destructive pattern? I hope so. Is there something in your life that God has spoken to you about before? Is He speaking to you just now about some pattern that brings bondage?
When we come to the Word of God, we come before the very living, loving, divine person of Christ himself, who is invisible to our eyes but loving, divine person of Christ himself. Isn't really listening unless He will reverse this self-destructive process of memorization-of immersion that applies to this area of bondage and then memorize it. In that way, what are you going to do about what the unseen Christ has told you?

Rev. Bill Richardson is Director of Anchor Pastor Development for Mainstay Church Resources.

Invited to be with Royalty
From the composer of the worship song, "Majesty"-

"The atmosphere was impregnated with an ennobling air of royalty! It was impossible to be there and not to feel a sense of destiny in the rooms of the giant castle."

Those are my own words, describing my visit to Churchill's boyhood home at Blenheim Palace, in Oxfordshire, England. It was this setting which ignited thoughts resulting in a thought-leap to the fact that we are daily invited to walk and talk with royalty.

Suddenly I was stirred. Majesty! His majesty, whom I worship, not only welcomes my fellowship, but wants to infuse my life with purpose and power as I bow in His presence.

-Jack Hayford, Moments With Majesty, Multnomah, 1990, p. 19

The Book of James tells us that the Word of God is not something to be tasted and discarded, but is like a mirror to our souls. When we act on what we see and hear, we allow the Word to do its transforming work.

James tells us that it is only when we see the Word of God as a mirror to our souls that real change occurs. True listening involves more than hearing—it requires doing what we hear. The defining question is, "What are you going to do about what the unseen Christ has told you?"

Women's Society page by Laura Price

A call for contributions

Dear Women (young and/or mature),

No, I'm not seeking any lucre from you, but something far more valuable—your thoughts and insights!

As the new "editaire" of the Sabbath Recorder Women's Society page, I am delighted to have the opportunity to write for you (as well as for any of the men who peruse our page). However, I do welcome and encourage you ladies out there to send in any interesting articles you run across. I am interested in any copyright-free or permission-free author material that you find worthwhile and would like to see printed in the SR.

Perhaps you are inspired to pen some of your own thoughts about things—from the trivial (i.e., a paper clip), to the profound (i.e., a paper clip), to everything in between (i.e., a paper clip).

Now let's not dismiss the paper clip idea! I'm certain that there are those of you out there who are creative or insightful enough to come up with something involving a paper clip; a tale that could relate to any participation.

I would like to have the opportunity to actually "edit" and not exclusively "accept" those of you out there, here is a call for a few words or a few pages of words.

Women's page sponsored in memory of Mary Irish Carpenter—February 2001
Such housing gave practical shelter for the winter months until more permanent homes could be erected in the spring and summer. But hope was delayed in the spring of 1873. Elder Oscar Babcock's son, Edwin, later wrote about this harrowing experience. And nearly 100 years later, information from his writings appeared in The Ort Quiz, a local newspaper: "It being April 12, it was warm, pleasant and sunny and 'fair as May.' Farmers in the North Loup Valley were busy that day planting their early potatoes and gardens. This being the first year for those immigrants from Wisconsin, they spent the day thinking 'what an even climate' and marveling at how different it was from their former home state of Wisconsin. There were no storms. There was no need for sleds as there had been no snow nor awful drifts. It did indeed appear as a land of perpetual sunshine. "Each morning the sounds of saws and hammers could be heard as workers began construction of the first permanent house of the town. It was under the direction of the Rev. Oscar Babcock, and was to serve as his home, the post office, church, court room and county judge's office. "Towards evening a gentle mist from the north began to come down. The people however were happy about this for it was just what the gardens and grass were needing."

The newspaper then printed this account of the Babcock's experience with the storm: "Morning seemed to come and wakefulness, but still the darkness brooded over all. He [Elder Oscar Babcock] struck a match and, finding out it was 7 a.m., he sprang from his bed and looked out the window and found nothing but a pane of white. "He opened the door but beyond was nothing more than a wall of snow. Edwin remembers his father 'thrusting out his good right arm but the snow wall stopped it like a wall of stone.' He then took a poker and a butcher knife and slowly burrowed a hole through to the blinding, raging storm. "The wet, gale-driven snow filled ears and eyes, clung to their lashes, beards and hair. His father cont. on page 26

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Change in the weather

One hundred and thirty years ago a group of Seventh Day Baptists in Central Wisconsin formed a Colonization Association. Its purpose was to find suitable land for resettlement "to give such of our people as observe the Seventh Day of the week as the Sabbath the opportunity to settle together for the purpose of convenience, as well as to avoid molesting others who differ in religious faith." A Locating Committee was formed to explore government or railroad land in the West that might offer more favorable soil for farming than the sandy earth of Waushara County. Most of the members of that Association had already experienced family migrations. Traveling from New England into Central New York, they had settled in Persia, in the snowbelt area near Buffalo. Several families later settled on the rich Rock Prairie near Milton, Wis. But that land was too expensive, so they purchased cheaper land in Central Wisconsin.

After the Civil War, talk turned toward moving to greener pastures to the south and west. Elder Oscar Babcock was the chairman of that Colonization Association which chose the Loup River in Nebraska as their "promised land."

In April 1872, the first migration took place. Since there were few trees on the prairie, many of the families lived in "dugouts" carved from the banks. Oscar Babcock's home was 14 feet square, with the opening shielded by a sod wall that had one window and a wooden door. A length of pipe extending up through the dirt roof served as a chimney.

This sketch of Elder Oscar Babcock's "dug out" was used on a 1921 cover of "The Bulletin," quarterly newsletter of the North Loup, Neb., SDB Church.

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Pastor John Conrod writes about "a royal priesthood and church polity." Johannam Camenga shares his SCSC memories from Daytona Beach, Fla.; Aubrey Appel covers the first-ever National Youth Retreat in Milton, Wis.

"Focus" page announces next SDB World Federation gathering to meet in Brazil in 2003. Editor Kevin Butler shares photos and stories from the Baptist World Congress in Melbourne, Australia, and his visit with SDBs in Sydney.

Five years ago—February 1996

30-Day Spiritual Adventure is "What to Do When You Don't Know What to Do." Features come from Rick Crouch and Pastor Edgar Wheeler.

Page of Valentine tributes carries special love, and helps support the SR.

Daytona Beach hosts South Atlantic Coast Churches Day in November.

Kirk Looper reports on his trip to Haiti, accompanied by Pastors Andy Samuels and Romulus Honoré.

Lost Creek, W.Va., church adds Dennis Bond and Laurence Nida to the diaconate.

Ten years ago—February 1991

Writers open up their hearts as they share about "Death in the Family." "Pastor Joe Staun," on the Board of Christian Education page, explains his concept of the Sabbath as the third sacrament.

Leon Lattow recalls first Missionary Society journey to SDB ministries in Finland and Estonia.

Report of reconciliation in the Philippines shared by Gabriel Bajjani and Rodney Henry following their trip there.

South Atlantic churches gather for first general meeting.

25 years ago—February 1976

For her speech, "My Responsibility to Freedom," Elaine Rymer of the Riverside, Calif., SDB Church wins the George Washington Medal from the Freedoms Foundation of Valley Forge, Pa.

Eight SDB ministerial students gather in Nortonville, Kan., for a New Year's retreat.

Charles Swing, pastor at DeRuyter, N.Y., writes on the fourth Beatitude.

Historian Thomas Merchant presents the "Who, what, why of Conference Standing Committees."

Tract Society converts to "cold-type" typesetting equipment. The February SR is the first one run on the new "Compuwriter IV."

50 years ago—February 1951

Conference President Alton Wheeler asks, "Are you a contributor to the church or a steward of God?"

Rev. Melvin Nida named as new editor of The Helping Hand.

Alfred Station, N.Y., church agrees to provide assistance to the Alfred church in hosting General Conference in August.

New missionary workers to New Zealand—Rev. and Mrs. Emmett Bottoms—are commissioned at the Western, R.I., church.

Historical marker placed at the site of the old West Hallock SDB Church (near Edelstein, Ill.) on the 100th anniversary of its founding.

...where are we headed?

Pray for—

- World Federation Conferences and churches
- the work of our regional Associations
- Executive Secretary Dr. Pete May
- your diaconate members
- those who have recently lost loved ones
- our publishing ministries
- Conference meetings in Lindsborg, Kan.
Questions help in education process

Questions are an important part of education. Teachers use questions to help students think through and discover new ways of thinking. Yet, asking is not the only way to use questions in Christian Education.

After God took Moses from Israel, Joshua led the people. They crossed into the Promised Land. As they crossed the river, Joshua told 12 men to pick up stones from the middle of the dry patch. These stones were set up as a monument to the action of God for the people of Israel. The purpose: to make children ask questions.

"Let this be a sign among you, so that when your children ask later, saying, ‘What do these stones mean to you?’ then you shall say to them, ‘Because the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, when it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off.’ So these stones shall become a memorial to the sons of Israel forever.” (Joshua 4:6-7, NASB update).

God told the Children of Israel to create a situation that caused their children to ask questions. Jesus used a cursed fig tree to help the disciples ask him important questions (Mark 11:20ff).

We can use what Jesus and the Children of Israel used. Let us create situations that will intrigue our children and adults. As questions are asked, may we be ready to provide guidance toward a better understanding of and relationship with God.

The Sabbath School Committee of the Seventh Day Baptist Board of Christian Education is seeking nominations for the next Sabbath School Teacher of the Year. Each member church of the General Conference may nominate one teacher. The following criteria will be used for the 16th annual Crystal Apple award:

As questions are asked, may we be ready to provide guidance toward a better understanding of and relationship with God.

-Is a member in good standing of the nominating church
-Exhibits the qualities of faith and teaching found in the life and teaching of Christ
-Currently serves as a Sabbath School teacher

The local church pastor and superintendent are asked to complete, sign, and return the form certifying the nominating church’s church membership, present teaching position, previous teaching experience, unique teaching skills or practices, and other Christian Education service. The postmarked deadline is June 30, 2001.

The Board is seeking nominees whose teaching skills have contributed to the Christian conversion and nurture of our people. The Board understands that it is not possible to recognize and honor every worthy teacher. Nevertheless, we wish to honor one such teacher on behalf of all our Sabbath School teachers. We urge the local church to annually recognize all of their teachers.

Only recently have we found someone who is willing to go the “extra mile” — to organize individuals into a group that will help register and develop our denomination in Burundi.

In December 2000, we received a message alleging that Adventists bribed the local government to deny organization status to the SDB church in Burundi. This was disappointing to the members, but they still are determined to get the status they need to begin reaching out. Let us pray that the work of Satan be done through these dissidents will soon be vanquished, and that the work of the Lord will continue forward.

Ghana

It was so wonderful to receive good news from Pastor S.O. Tetteh, Executive Secretary of the Seventh Day Baptist Churches in Ghana.

In a fax, he expressed joy at receiving secondhand clothing and other items over the past few months. He also expressed thanks for the funds sent from those in the U.S.A. and Canada. Pastor Tetteh assured me that $100 went to the Women's Society, as directed by the donor. Bibles and supplies were purchased to help in the crusades that they hold throughout the year. They are so grateful to those who are willing to share their blessings, enabling workers in Ghana to reach out into their neighboring communities and villages.

The church in Ghana has made many improvements in spreading the Gospel, and will soon open their second branch at Russia Town in Accra. They continue to invite churches that share SDB beliefs to come and join them in an associational relationship. By God's grace, they have made headway in this area.

The Ghana group looks forward to the time when they have enough churches to meet as a Conference and can establish their own Manual of Procedures and beliefs. Let us pray that this time is close at hand. Presently, they are using the Manual of Procedures supplied by the United States and Canada Conference.

The leaders there would like to attend the SDB General Conference meetings in the United States to get an idea about how to conduct their Conference meetings.
A peaceful accident
by Aubrey Appel, Milton, Wis.

"And the peace of God, which
transcends all understanding, will
guard your hearts and your minds
in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7).

I laughed nervously to ease my
tension and looked at Peter to make
sure he was okay. I sat there for what
seemed like forever, taking in my
new surroundings and trying to real-
ize what had just happened.

After looking through the snow
and frost-covered windshield again,
I slowly pushed open the car door
and peered down into two feet of
snow. I must have said "Oh my good-
ness" 200 times as the details filtered
through my senses.

Wisconsin had received a foot of
snow, and now it was falling. We
landed in a soft, snowy ditch, stuck
and cold.

I couldn't believe my carelessness.
I hadn't been careful while driving in
the snow, and now I was paying for it.
As soon as my car stopped moving, peo-
ples began to slow down and ask if
we needed help. God certainly was
watching out for us!

While we waited in the cold, dark
night for a wonderful couple to pull
us out of the ditch with their truck,
I realized that no matter what
happens, God takes care of me. No
matter what happened with the car,
He would still love me, and life would
go on.

As the peace of God took a firm
hold on my heart, I began to thank
God that no one had been hurt, that
the car was still running, and that we
were helping us.

I stood there in knee-deep snow, amazed at the
countless blessings God had given
me in only ten minutes. I could not
quite believe it.

Now, I am much more careful
when I drive in snow. And I still
thank God for keeping us safe that
night. But the thing that I will always
remember—besides being utterly
embarrassed—is the peace I felt that
evening. I knew, without a doubt,
that God was watching over me, and that
He was taking extremely good
care of me. He stopped my worries
and let me see all that I had to be
thankful for.

I couldn't believe
my carelessness.
I hadn't been cautious
driving in the snow, and
now I was paying for it.

To me, a friend is
someone who knows
and loves you. Usually,
there is nothing each
of you would not do for the other.
There is mutual trust and integrity.

If you try God, you will find
a similar relationship. Scripture tells
over and over how God loves us
and wants us to love Him. Psalm 25:6-10
says,"Good and upright is the Lord:
Therefore, He instructs sinners in the
way. He leads the humble in justice,
and He teaches the humble His way.

In my Conference theme, "Try
God," one of the areas that I would
like to look at is to know God.
Before I could trust and follow
someone in my life, I needed to know
them. To know them required me to
spend time with them and effort on
them. I had to learn all I could about
them—who they were, what they did,
what they believed, how they acted.
Then I could follow their teaching.

To have a friend is something
very hard to come by. We have many
people we know and associate with
on a day-to-day basis. But, to me,
a friend is someone who knows and
loves you, and you know and love
him. Usually, there is nothing each
of you would not do for the other.

To me, a friend is someone who knows
and loves you. Usually,
there is nothing each
doing would not do for the other.

I can see what the Senior Saints
have done recently to help others
by doing God's work. A number of
"saints" traveled to Janesville,
Wis., to help Calvin and Meleta
Babcock side their house. Everyone
who participated said the time was
rewarding.

Workers renewed friendships
and made new ones as they
fellowshipped, and fun was had by
all. Also, a lot of work was accom-
plished. Isn't it great how God meets
the needs of everyone?

The Senior Saints also went to
Camp Joy in Berea, W.Va. They
side the church building, which
had been a landmark in the com-

What We Must Do
1. Trust (Faith)
   Ps. 25:1-2a
2. Know Him and His
   Covenant
   Ps. 25:14-15
3. Integrity (Commitment)
   Ps. 25:21, 10

What God Will Do
1. Salvation
   Ps. 25:5-7
2. Teaching (Follow)
   Ps. 25:4-5, 8-9
3. Blessings
   Rom. 15:13, John 14:17,
   and Ps. 25:13

The President's Page
Getting to know God
by Clayton Pinder

All the paths of the Lord are loving-
kindness and truth to those who keep
His covenant and His testimonies.
To me, God has been dependable.
He never changes; He's always there
when I need Him. There isn't any
problem He can't help me with. He
comforts me and gives me peace. As
a result, God has given me joy and
the assurance that, through Him,
I can do all that He wants me to do.

For me, a friend is someone who knows
and loves you. Usually, there is nothing each
doing would not do for the other.

I can see what the Senior Saints
have done recently to help others
by doing God's work. A number of
"saints" traveled to Janesville,
Wis., to help Calvin and Meleta
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   Rom. 15:13, John 14:17,
   and Ps. 25:13
...and from our newsletters

New Ministry at the Goldfinch House

Some time ago, when our congregation at Marlboro began to investigate and explore new ministries in which to become involved, there was much interest in reaching out and becoming involved with the elderly. An opportunity opened up in September at the Goldfinch House, an assisted living residence in Bridgeton. The staff and residents have graciously welcomed us one evening a month to visit and present a program or activity. So far, we have led hymn-singings, which all seem to enjoy, with some of our congregation contributing special music selections to add to the program. We encourage all who are interested in this new ministry to contribute their ideas, gifts, and talents toward making this an interesting and enjoyable time for everyone.

—from "Marlboro Matters," Marlboro (Bridgeton), N.J.

Christian Education goals developed

At a teacher planning meeting held in September, the Battle Creek BDB Church developed the following Christian Education Mission Statement and Goals:

Mission Statement
To provide all ages with organized, systematic learning opportunities to bring people to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. To help them gain a better understanding of God’s Word and apply it to their everyday living for the purpose of making them disciples for Christ.

Goals
- To ensure each student has an understanding of our basic beliefs and the concept of what it means to be a covenant people. Equip them to be able to share their Christian Testimony. Help them to feel comfortable in the use of the Bible. Teach each student about the need for salvation. Help them to know and understand God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Everyone is urged to attend Sabbath School and to get involved in a cell group as we all strive to grow in the understanding of and relationship with God and each other.

Experiencing God in Riverside

Perhaps you’ve heard the buzz going around at church lately about the course, Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God by Henry Blackaby. Since October, 11 members of our congregation have been experiencing God in a real and fresh way. The course requires participants to do five lessons per week. Each lesson takes about 30 to 45 minutes to complete. Then group members meet once a week for discussion, prayer, and fellowship.

Pastor Eric [Davis] will be leading another Experiencing God group on Sunday evenings starting in February. A second group will be held on a weekday morning for those who do not like to go out at night.

The Experiencing God course will lead you in a 12-unit study of the Bible to learn how to know God better, how to know when God is speaking, and how to adjust your life and ministry to God’s revelation of His will.

—from "The Church Chimes," Riverside, Calif.

Salem to Teikyo to International

Salem-Teikyo University (Salem College from 1888 to 1989), has changed its name again, this time to Salem International University.

"The new name and new look reflect our changing student population. We now draw international students from all over the world and not just from Japan. About one-third of our students are international and the remainder are American. Our mission and our commitment remain the same—to educate a world citizen who acquires wide knowledge without prejudice and makes decisions with an international point of view."—President Ronald Ohi


Daytona holds Appreciation Day for pastor

On October 14, 2000, retired pastor Charles Graffius was chairman of this special day. Rev. John Camenga and wife Linda were invited to the front of the sanctuary. The call to worship was 1 Timothy 5:17:

"Let the leaders, who rule, be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine."

Each separate unit of the church shared their appreciation of Pastor John as their pastor, in their own individual way. Among the musical offerings was the Camenga children trio of Faith, Grace, and JohnMark, who sang a medley of choruses they learned as a family when traveling. It was well received—in tears, love, and joy.

Some Sabbath School classes presented the pastor with gift certificates, others with a gift of their help. One couple offered their Prayer of Appreciation. The high school Sabbath School class entertained us with a humorous skit and reminded us of the many roles that Pastor John fills in our church.

The McCall family (great grandmother to great granddaughters, seven members) sang songs, expressing their love and appreciation. Alice Wheeler offered her gift of flowers to Pastor and Linda. Appreciation of all staff was expressed with a standing ovation.

Everyone received blank certificates to be filled in with their choice of a service or gift they would extend to Pastor and Linda on October 21st. On that day, a "Thanksgiving" dinner was served in honor of the Camengas. This was well attended and several shared their appreciation and love in "after-dinner" speeches.

Pastor John expressed his family’s gratefulness for the Appreciation Celebration.

—from the "Sentinel," Daytona Beach, Fla.
New Members

Ashaway, RI
Scott Smith, pastor
Joined after baptism
Gabby Gergel
Ray Scallill
Joined after testimony
Debbie Scallill
Joined by letter
David Ray
Laura Ray
 Mildred Saunders
Ruth Skladny
Pam Vader
Dwight Wilson
Wilma Wilson

Shiloh, NJ
Donald Chroniger, pastor
Joined after baptism
Ariel DuBois
Lauren DuBois
Melissa Hitchner
Keeli McPherson
Kyle Uhland

Births

Rodd.—A son, Nicodemus Rodd, was born to Dennis and Debbie Rodd of Yuba City, CA, on August 12, 2000.

Williams.—A son, Austin James Williams, was born to Bob and Becky Williams of Rome, NY, on September 2, 2000.

Smalley.—A son, Aaron Joseph Smalley, was born to Pastor Daron and Paula Smalley of Portage, WI, on September 15, 2000.

Marriages

Camenga - Rogers.—Johnmark Camenga and Mary Catherine Rogers were married on August 5, 2000, in the Salem (WV) Seventh Day Baptist Church. Rev. Dale D. Thorngate officiated, assisted by Rev. John Camenga.

LaGrange - Hunt.—April Maria LaGrange and Mark Anthony Hunt were united in marriage on August 12, 2000, at their home in Taberg, NY, by Justice of Peace Fremont Plopper.

Loofboro - Johnson.—Walter Loofboro and Marcia Johnson were united in marriage on October 20, 2000, in Tilden, WI. Pastor Dale Smalley and Fr. William Felix officiated.

Wyse - Rogers.—Ryan Dean Wyse and Sarah Whitney Rogers were married on October 21, 2000, in the Assemblies of God Church in Lancaster, OH. Rev. Dale D. Thorngate officiated.

Obituaries

Key.—Edna May Key, 69, of Colorado Springs, CO, died on August 16, 2000, at her home following an extended illness. She was born on August 20, 1931, in Colorado Springs, the daughter of Hugh and Lillian Key. After graduating from high school in Colorado Springs, she attended the University of Kansas School of Nursing. Her lifetime nursing career was spent in hospitals and nursing homes in Colorado Springs. Edna’s father was a large Scottish man, and her mother was a Blackfoot Indian. She also had family roots in Daniel Boone. Her great-great-grandfather was Francis Scott Key, who formed the first Sunday School and wrote the “Star Spangled Banner.” Edna donated some of his original works to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., and remained proud of her family heritage throughout her life. Edna’s great-grandfather pastored a Sabbatarian Scottish church, and she was taught about Jesus in her home. Nothing was more important to her than having people accept Jesus Christ. Edna was a charter member of the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Colorado Springs. From 1950-1953, she attended the Denver, Colo., SDB Church. Edna, preceded in death by two siblings, had no surviving family. A memorial service was held on November 11, 2000, in the Lost Creek SDB Church, with Rev. Dale D. Thorngate officiating.

Saunders.—Herbert William (“Bill”) Saunders, 84, of Boulder, CO, died on November 13, 2000. He was born on June 13, 1916, in Bolder, the son of Herbert W. and Mary M. (Davis) Saunders. In 1937, he graduated from Boulder High School and entered Colorado State Teachers College; and, for many years, working as a guidance counselor at South Harrison High School in West Milford, W.Va., and received a Bachelor of Science degree from Salem College, where he captained the football team. He was a member of the Salem Seventh Day Baptist Church, where he served as a deacon for many years. He loved singing in the choir and in a men’s quartet. He was also great at helping with the upkeep of the church building.

Mrs. Bond was a graduate of Salem (W.Va.) College with a Standard Normal Degree. For most of her life, she was a homemaker. After her husband’s death, she worked as a cook at the South Harrison High School. Later, she was a foster grandmother at the Salem Industrial Home, and at the Lost Creek and West Milford Elementary Schools. In a final act of giving, she donated her body to the Human Gift Registry. Mrs. Bond was a lifelong member of the Lost Creek Seventh Day Baptist Church (79 years), where she held many offices. She taught Sabbath School, Vacation Bible School, and in summer camps, and was active in the Ladies Aid.

Survivors include one son, Dr. S. Thomas Bond of Lone Lew, W.Va.; two daughters, Lotta Ann Bailey of Lost Creek, and Helen Lou Maxson of West Virginia City, CA, on August 20, 2000, and received a Bachelor of Nursing. Her academic career included coaching at Plainfield (N.J.) High School, teaching at Bristol (W.Va.) High School, serving as Dean of Men at Alfred (N.Y.) State Technical College and line coach at Alfred University; Dean of Students at Salem College; and, for many years, working as a guidance counselor at South Harrison High School in West Milford, W.Va.

Mr. Peary was a member of the Salem Seventh Day Baptist Church, where he served as an ordained deacon and trustee. Until his illness, he cont. next page
served as president of the Board of Managers of Randolph Terrace Apartments, the housing complex owned and operated by the church. A memorial service was held on December 9, 2000, at the Salem SDB Church, with Rev. Dr. Dale D. Thorn gate presiding.

Hiller.—Laura B. Hiller, 95, of Upper Deerfield Township, N.J., died on December 11, 2000, at the Cumberland Manor in Hopewell Township, where she had been a resident for the last two months. She was born in Roadstown, N.J., the daughter of Daniel and Julia (Davis) Johnson. A graduate of the former Hopewell (N.J.) High School, she was a lifelong resident of the Bridge ton area.

She was married to Alfred Hiller, who died in 1979. The couple owned and operated the Giant Sub Shop on North Pearl Street for several years until retiring. They also owned an awning business in Bridge ton for several years.

Laura was a member of the Seventy Seventh Baptist Church of Shiloh, N.J., and the former Cumberland Chapter #145, Order of the Eastern Star.

Survivors include several nieces and nephews, including W. Frank Johnson of Cherry Hill, N.J., Donna Haden and Kay Cogdill, and several great-nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by four sisters, Harriet Trout, Ruth Goss, Evelyn Johnson, and Julia Myers; two brothers, Ezra and Willis Johnson; and her niece and caregiver, Susan Johnson.

Funeral services were held on December 14, 2000, at the Freitag Funeral Home, Bridge ton. Pastor Donald Chroniger of the Shiloh SDB Church officiated. Interment was in the Cohansey Baptist Cemetery in Roadstown.

Change in the weather, cont. from page 16

had to keep digging because he had left his ax and shovel at the new house that was being worked on the day before, and that ‘eighty long rods away.’

‘And so he started, no danger fearing...’ He ’knew not so many that fearsome day would perish while going only a few rods away.’ When he did get to the house he found

the new house ‘blown flat,’ but he was able to find the ax and shovel among the debris.

‘He managed to return to his home, but after breakfast attempted to get to his livestock in a dug-out barn.

‘When he got to where he thought the barn was, he had to burrow down through the snow and roof. There was so much trapped snow in the little barn that the animals’ backs were rubbing the roof. He put hay into the racks and with more hay he calked the cracks. He then sealed the barn with heavy snow and pro-

ceeded to chop wood from a deadened tree limb and start back to the house.

‘But ’hampered by the ax and arm full of wood,’ his father missed his course and was lost on the plain. Stopping, he questioned his quickened wits, turned his other cheek to the cold north wind, retracing his steps to the known creek bank. Two times he repeated before he found upon the third dugout mound.

The storm continued for three long days—April 13, 14, and 15—without letup. Edwin Babcock remembered two families huddled together in their home during the storm and sitting in total darkness in order to save lamp oil.

‘Each day his father had to make the trip to try and find more firewood and to care for the ani-

mals. On Wednesday the storm stopped and children crawled out to the sunshine. Snow was said to be twenty feet deep and ‘a crow bar wouldn’t pierce it.’

‘Many and sad are tales that are told of this fearful blizzard of 1873: L.C. Jacobs saved his teams and cows by driving them into his new log house. Thousands of cattle, like panicked troops, found their way to the Platte and Loup Rivers. And many brave men of stalwart form lost life and limb in this demon storm.’

Somehow, as this “Pearl from the Past” is entered into the computer in near zero December weather, it does not seem as much of a hardship to venture to the garage and start an 8-horsepower snowblower to clear the driveway and sidewalk. Or wait for the city’s snowplow and sander to prepare the way to go to the store or work.

A white Christmas, even in the northern states from which the “North Loupers” emigrated, does not seem quite so harsh. About a half century later, Rev. Oscar Babcock’s namesake grandson, O.T. (Oscar True) Babcock, came back to Milton to attend college. He stayed and worked from 1925 to 1952 at Milton College registrar—in frigid Wisconsin.

Edwin remembers his father ‘thrusting out his good right arm but the snow wall stopped it like a wall of stone.’
If you enjoyed reading December's special issue, "Journey of a Lifetime," how about sharing the story with neighbors and friends?

You may receive more copies of this special issue by contacting us at the Seventh Day Baptist Center, PO Box 1678, Janesville WI 53547. Our phone number is (608) 752-5055, and the e-mail address is sdbmedia@inwave.com.

Individual copies are free. We will need to add shipping charges for larger quantities. Please contact us for those costs.

We pray that the Lord will bless this outreach effort, and many others will join us on our "Journey of a Lifetime."