Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.

—Proverbs 22:6
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.

The seventh day

God commanded that the seventh day (Saturday) be kept holy. Jesus agreed by keeping it as a day of worship. We observe the seventh day of the week (Saturday) as God's holy day as an act of loving obedience—not as a means of salvation. Salvation is the free gift of God through Jesus Christ. It is the joy of the Sabbath that makes SDBs a little bit different.

If you would like more information, write: The Seventh Day Baptist Center, 3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678. Phone (608) 752-5055; FAX (608) 752-7711; E-mail: sdbgen@iwave.com and the SDB Web site: www.seventhdaybaptist.org

Robe of Achievement nominations

The SDB Women's Society is accepting nominations for the Robe of Achievement for 2003. Please consider 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 resume must be submitted containing a life history, including her achievements and activities. Without a resume 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 resume.

Send all nominations to:
Robe Nominations
219 First Ave.
Daytona Beach FL 32114
or apply on-line at
www.sdbwboard.org

Deadline: March 31, 2003

Come to Brazil

Sessions of the Seventh Day Baptist World Federation (SDBWF) will be held February 10-16, 2003, in Curitiba, Paraná, Brazil. SDBWF delegates and observers will be welcome also at the Brazil convention sessions the previous week, February 4-8.

Contact Rev. Dale Thorngate, SDBWF Executive Secretary, for additional info:
171 E. Main St.
Salem WV 26426 USA
Phone: (304) 782-1727
FAX: (304) 782-4792
E-mail: sdbwf@ssl.com

Year-End Retreats!!

Youth:
Dec. 29 – Jan. 1
Camp Wakonda
Milton, Wis.
Nate Crandall, Director
sdcbce@educating-christians.org

Young Adults:
Dec. 29 – Jan. 2
Rancho Ybarra Camp
Tujunga, Calif.
Anna Mackintox, coor.
blueeyes21212@netscape.net

The SABBATH RECORDER
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Kevin Butler
Editor
Leanne Lippincott
Assistant Editor

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Teaching on purpose

The purpose of the Board of Christian Education
by Andrew Camenga

Somewhere between Bethany and Jerusalem dwelt a fig tree that was about to become famous. It wasn’t doing anything all that spectacular—simply sinking roots into the soil, growing leaves, and preparing for a fruitful harvest season.

The tree could not converse with people passing by, or pull up its roots and move around. Instead, it just stood there—photonsynthesizing. Fortune was not in the tree’s future; however, fame was.

A small group accompanied Jesus on His way to Jerusalem. He became hungry and saw the fig tree. He approached it and discovered nothing but leaves. So Jesus said, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again!”

The disciples heard Jesus curse the tree, and they all continued on their way. Later in the week, as the disciples traveled with Jesus back into the city, Peter noticed the fig tree. It was no longer nice and green. Instead, its roots had withered and the tree was dead.

The frustrating part of this Gospel season is that God created a situation that caused people to ask questions, and then used those questions to teach.

Jesus used the cursing of the fig tree to teach the disciples about faith.

This was not the first time that this technique shows up in the Bible. The General Conference theme for 2002, “What do these stones mean?” reminds us of when God instructed the Israelites to erect a pile of stones taken from the bottom of the Jordan River. God wanted to cause the children to ask, “What do these stones mean?”

As soon as that question was asked, the parents were to tell of the mighty acts of God. God created a situation that caused people to ask questions, and then used those questions to teach. God was teaching on purpose.

We can and should follow God’s example. God expects us to teach on purpose. He wants us to come up with ways to help our brothers and sisters in Christ grow.

God commanded the children of Israel to make teaching and talking about Him a part of their everyday lives (Deuteronomy 6:4–9). He commands us to think carefully about how we can encourage others to think in ways that demonstrate His love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:22–25). God challenges us to create situations that will cause others to grow. He asks us to teach on purpose.

By asking us to teach, God asks us to encourage others to change. The very words of the Great Commission—“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:18b–20)—make this clear.

We are, with God’s ever-present help, to convince people to follow Jesus and to constantly teach obedience. Like it or not, we are called to teach God’s way and will. But this teaching will not be forever.

Teaching can stop when we have all attained “to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:13). The Lord describes a day when our faith will be completely portable, a day when His word will be heart-written, and we will all be able to read and do what is the will of God (Hebrews 8:11).

Until every Believer can stand and say, “I have achieved the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ,” that time has not come. So far now, reach out to others, strive to do God’s will, and work to teach what Christ has commanded.

Here is where the work of the Seventh Day Baptist Board of Christian Education becomes a reality. We are here to assist the local church in this effort to carry out God’s Great Commission. We do this by encouraging individuals to be intentional about reaching out to people who have not accepted Christ, and to be intentional about nurturing those who have accepted Him.

Designing programs that promote and support the assembly—people gathered in the name of Jesus Christ—is another way we assist the local church. Our seminars and workshops help churches examine and re-examine important ministries and develop important skills. We strive to help by preparing and producing publications that teach what Seventh Day Baptists consider important—things like evangelism, covenant community, and the Sabbath.

The purpose of the Board of Christian Education seeks to establish the importance of being intentional in education, we also encourage individuals to become complete and consistent in their walk with God. In essence, we are doing what we can to help faith become both tangible and portable. Even as God has called us to teach on purpose, He has called us to learn and obey.

Faith is not impressed on others; faith is personally lived. In the presence of the withered fig tree, Jesus said to Peter, “Have faith in God.” He used a curse to teach the disciples an important lesson about faith, God’s power, and God’s expectations.

He used the tree to call them to faith. He used the tree to call us to faith.

The words we express about faith in worship are to describe the faith lives in you. Learn names. See faces. Don’t treat others as a means to an end (I must go through this line to get groceries or as an obstacle to overcome (If I turn left here, I’ll beat him to the parking space). Instead, treat all as loved ones worthy of God’s grace.

God is alive and active in the lives of Seventh Day Baptists. He works miracles of healing. He provides grace that allows forgiveness in difficult situations. He grants the Spirit and guides our interpretation of His book. God calls us together as a people and says, “Make disciples!”

The official purpose of the Board of Christian Education begins with the call to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. It ends with the call to develop materials and programs to fulfill Christ’s Great Commission. Some of the programs, publications, and other functions of the Board are described in this Sabbath Recorder.

If there are ways that we can assist your church, please do not hesitate to call. We want to help. If you would like to support the ongoing work of the Board, let us know. (See page 10 for contact information.)

Program, publication, and encouragement are what we offer. The hard part of the Christian walk—reaching out to new people, learning God’s will, strengthening others—will always fall squarely on the shoulders of the local church. It will always depend on you.
Building our covenant community

by Andrew Cumenga

Every local church is a tangible example of God's people for that area or neighborhood. Fellowship, worship, service, and love are obvious markers of His people. Gathered closely with churches that believe more than we can accomplish separately, we often choose to associate more with others to do more.

As we work with others to do more, we see at any single place. Seventh Day Baptists endeavor to maintain working with people until the return of Jesus. While I wasn't old enough to make careful, objective observation of the people who lived around me, it was clear that those who lived in one place were different from the people who lived in the other places. Dress, talk, dialect, and mindset varied from one place to another. These differences, combined with my tendency to be somewhat quiet, were relatively easy to apply to life.

Yet, I remember thinking that Paul's words—"I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, thereunto with content" (Philippians 4:11)—were relatively easy to apply to life. I was able to be content, not because I'd lived in several states, but because I had learned through those years that a people of God, known as Seventh Day Baptists, loved me wherever I lived. In addition to the constant love my parents shared with me, frequent attendance at Association meetings and General Conference sessions made it clear that a large group of people who loved God cared for me. The General Conference sessions were a significant part of my experience of "community." From the many talks that I've had over recent years, I know that camps, retreats, Association meetings, and General Conference sessions have helped many understand that they belong to a people who love God and are called according to His purpose. The generally large distance between Seventh Day Baptist churches and the relatively small size of our congregations means that these joint activities are important in our walk as God's people.

One of the goals of the Board of Christian Education is to encourage and support activities that help bring the people of our churches together.

For that reason, the Board supports the annual Young Adult Coffee House—an opportunity to share in an enjoyable atmosphere the variety of talents and gifts that God has given. On Sabbath day, with the approval of the General Conference president, the Board arranges for Sabbath School classes for all ages. While the most obvious community-building work occurs around the week of General Conference, other work is done throughout the year. The Board has supported Year-End retreats for youth and young adults. These retreats provide another opportunity to gather from all over the country to create, restore, and renew relationships. The Scripture Memory Program helps to highlight the Conference president's theme and unites many nationwide in their pursuit of "hiding God's Word."

Your participation in these activities is crucial, but they alone do not make relationships happen. Good relationships require people dedicated to the work of God who seek to build up everyone they meet. In almost every event listed above, volunteers make the programs work. General Conference, Associations, camps, and retreats help us remember that God's work is greater than the work in any given locale; however, these wider activities should strengthen us and encourage us to do His work at home.

Much of the backbreaking, heartrending work of the Great Commission is done at the local level. The General Conference community does not change that reality. I cannot talk to my next-door neighbor in Bath, N.Y., while meeting in Newberg, Ore. It is difficult to meet a neighbor while discussing evangelism at a Conference workshop. For that reason, the Board wants to help the local church in its setting.

You can read about some of the ways we do this in other articles in this Sabbath Recorder. At the same time, General Conference is an important part of the connectedness that God has given Seventh Day Baptists. We will work to support it.
A Helping Hand in Bible Study
by Andrew Camenga

Bible study is at the heart of the Christian walk. Bible study takes the many words that God has written to us and allows them to become guardians of our heart and lanterns for our feet.

Christians study the Bible when alone, and when they come together for worship and fellowship. It is something Christians do with purpose and when they come together at one purpose: to discuss the Scripture in a way that is accessible.

We want to encourage individuals to be involved in daily personal study even as they engage in weekly corporate study.

Heart of the Lesson—This section attempts to capture the essence of the lesson. While your class may choose to draw another lesson, this should provide at least one important way to connect with the text.

Key Verse—Chosen by the Committee on Uniform Series to represent the lesson focus. Some people choose to memorize these verses.

Questions for Studying the Text—The questions try to cover a wide range of learning. Some questions will have straightforward, one- and two-word answers. Other questions will require bringing significant knowledge of the whole of the Bible to the answer. Still other questions will look to applying the text to our daily walk.

Daily Bible Meditations—While many people recognize that daily interaction with the Bible is an important part of remaining in contact with God's will, selecting what to read can be an obstacle.

Understanding and Living—Explaining the context, historical background, and focus of the text is one purpose of this section. Another purpose is to encourage readers to apply the Scripture to their lives today.

This article takes five columns in the new format and replaces "Comment on Scripture," "Life Application," and "Insights for Youth." For this new section, we encourage authors to include personal examples that seemed to appear frequently in the "Insights for Youth."
What's a deacon to do?

Diaconate Workshop

From the time of the Apostles, local churches have recognized at least two offices—overseer and deacon. The Bible clearly describes qualifications for these offices in 1 Timothy 3. Seventh Day Baptists have confirmed these offices by ordaining pastors (presumably as overseers) and by ordaining deacons. In each case, the local church is seeking to recognize God's will and the gifts that He has placed in certain individuals. Some things in life seem to just "happen." However, God frequently expects us to count the cost. The fact that God offered, through Paul, a list of qualifications for members of the diaconate indicates that this area of church life is one that God expects us to think about.

It is good for a congregation of believers to review, from time to time, the various roles to which God has called His people and how those roles are best accomplished in the current work of the church. This is especially true of the work of the diaconate. For that reason, the Board of Christian Education has designed a workshop to help your church better understand the Biblical basis for the diaconate.

The Board of CE has designed a workshop to help your church better understand the Biblical basis for the diaconate.

The history that leads to Seventh Day Baptists in the United States and Canada, the workshop explores the variety of shapes and structures that the diaconate has had through the years. Since our final authority in matters of faith and practice is the Bible, we end the walk through history by returning to the Biblical text. Beginning with general expectations for all Christians and moving to the specific for deaconate members, the workshop then explores both the purpose and qualifications for the office of deacon.

Acknowledging that, at times, the work of the diaconate has been limited to serving communion and helping at baptisms, this learning time explores the many areas of legitimate work for the diaconate. It explores both the personal work of individual members and the congregational work of the whole diaconate. This section is intentionally overwhelming and yet offers many suggestions about how to begin working in each area of life.

At the end of the workshop, the local church begins to answer the question, "Where do we go from here?" After reviewing the initial picture "painted" by those involved at the workshop, we talk about what the church would like to see happen with the diaconate, and try to plan some initial steps to start moving in that direction.

Over the last two years, several churches have hosted the diaconate workshop in various settings. One church chose to incorporate the workshop as part of a diaconate retreat. Another used the workshop to help members and potential members of the diaconate think about the role of that group. Another church chose to include everyone in the congregation who wanted to attend. In each case, participants felt that the time spent in the workshop was worthwhile.

Let us help you "improve your serve" in your church's diaconal ministry. 

For more information on this workshop or any other Christian Education question, please contact us at:

SDB Board of Christian Education
PO Box 115
Alfred Station NY 14803
Phone/Fax: (607) 587-8537
sdbce@EducatingChristians.org

Get the MOST out of Sabbath School

Muriel Osborn Seminar for Teachers

One source for improving your teaching skills, recruiting new teachers, and encouraging others to think about Christian Education is the Muriel Osborn Seminar for Teachers (MOST). This seminar from the Board of Christian Education seeks to help people gain confidence in teaching skills that can be applied to most age groups.

Whether you teach children, youth, young adults, or adults, this seminar can help you learn new ideas and review already established skills. A few Seventh Day Baptist churches have already taken advantage of this seminar, and we at the Board would like to help your church, too.

Facts are fun. We can memorize them. We can learn them. We can master and manipulate them. Facts are a significant portion of any educational process. This is even true in Christian Education. A thorough knowledge of the Bible is important.

God has chosen to reveal Himself in many ways, and He has promised that His word is "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). It is possible to master the facts depicted in the Bible and to use that memorized knowledge to describe in detail what God has revealed.

The Bible is crucial and is our final authority in matters of faith and practice (see our SDB Statement of Belief). Believers must remember this reality. Yet, at its heart, Christian Education is not about teaching facts; it is helping others to walk and live with Jesus.

The primary content of Christian Education is the person of Jesus Christ. We will never learn to "manipulate" God. Because of this, Christian Education must be aware of both the factual and relational elements of teaching. It must choose methods of teaching that do not undermine the reality of God's presence in this world.

Teaching is the focus of the Muriel Osborn Seminar for Teachers. While it begins by sharing a theology of Christian Education and a description of learning and teaching, it does not try to answer the larger questions of "How should our Sabbath School be organized?" or "What curriculum should we be using?"

Instead, MOST looks to specific practical skills. By providing guidance and suggestions for preparing, teaching, planning, and leading in Christian Education settings, this seminar can help you and others in your church to be more effective as teachers, mentors, and discussion leaders.

Enough material has been prepared for the seminar to fill a weekend retreat; however, we recognize that many churches would like to provide teacher training but cannot schedule a full weekend.

At its heart, Christian Education is not about teaching facts; it is helping others to walk and live with Jesus.

SDB Statement

Most of the past and current content of this newsletter looks to specific practical skills. By providing guidance and suggestions for preparing, teaching, planning, and leading in Christian Education settings, this seminar can help you and others in your church to be more effective as teachers, mentors, and discussion leaders.

The current topic titles are Asking Good Questions, Using Small Groups (Breakouts), Teaching for Values, Story Telling, Increasing Learner Participation, Developing a Sentence Outline, Controlling Classroom Behavior, and How to Teach a Perfect Lesson. If a local congregation requests additional topics, we will develop and include them in their seminar.

To schedule a seminar, get approval from the appropriate person.
**Editors lend Helping Hand**

Since its inception in 1885, hundreds of Seventh Day Baptists have contributed to the writing of the *Helping Hand*. At times it has been written by a committee, or with individuals contributing portions or whole lessons. At other times, individuals have written a complete quarter or two. The following have served as editor:

1885-1886    A.E. Main
1886-1893    Lewis A. Platts
1893-1894    L.A. Livermore
1895-1899    Committee with 39 different contributors
1900-1926    William Calvin Whitford (26 years)
1927-1952    Erlo Sutton (25 years)
1952-1954    Melvin Nida
1955-1970    Don A. Sanford
1970-1975    Duane L. Davis
1975-1977    Jinx Kuehn Stonestrom
1977-1980    Albert N. Rogers
1981-1983    David Clarke
1984-1991    Linda Harris
1992    C. Rex Burdick
1993-1995    John Camenga
1996    Matthew Olson
1997-1999    Linda Harris
2000-    Andrew Camenga

We want the Sabbath School to be a time when our people can come together to discuss God’s Word, encourage one another in God’s work, discern God’s will, and support God’s plan. We plan to continue to offer the *Helping Hand* in Bible Study as one tool to help in that effort. **SR**

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**Large Print Edition**

An experiment with the *Helping Hand* is now underway. For churches in the United States and Canada that subscribe to the *Helping Hand*, a large print edition of the magazine is available as an Adobe Acrobat file. We distribute the file on a CD, then your church prints the pages and chooses an appropriate method for binding. Formatted for an 8-1/2 x 11-inch sheet, layout and page numbering remain the same. Contact the Board of Christian Education for more information about this product.

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**Hints for Teaching the Class—**

Provides teachers with interesting, quirky, and helpful methods for approaching the lesson material.

This is three-quarters of a column and will be of varying use to teachers. We do not expect this to become a normative description of how to teach the class; rather, we hope that it will provide thought-starters for teachers.

**Looking Forward/Looking Back—**

This section is intended to help provide some continuity through a unit of lessons. Each lesson will end with a one- or two-sentence summary of what is coming in the next week. At the end of a unit, a summary of what was covered will be provided instead.

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**Look, listen, and learn**

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17).

I have a friend who, because of that verse, started reading the Bible aloud to herself. Her diligent study and methods appear to work for her. It has helped impress the Scriptures on her memory to the extent that she is fairly good at recalling, quoting, and locating appropriate scriptural wisdom.

Churchill once said, "It is a good thing for an uneducated man to read books of quotations.... The quotations, when engraved upon the memory, give you good thoughts. They also make you anxious to read the authors and look for more.” (From *My Early Life* by Winston Churchill.)

Here are a few quotes related to Christian Education, "how to," and behavior:

- "And the servant of the Lord must not strive [quarrel]; but be gentle unto all men, apt [able] to teach, patient, In meekness instructing [correcting] those that oppose [are in opposition to] themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of [so they may know] the truth; And that they may recover themselves [come to their senses] out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at [to do] his will" (2 Tim. 2:24-26).

- "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity [love] edifieth [builds up]. And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any man love God, the same is known of him" (1 Cor. 8:1-3).

- "Go ye therefore, and teach [make disciples of] all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” (Matt. 28:19-20).

- "...Thus it is written, and thus it behooved [was necessary for] Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things" (Luke 24:46-48).

- "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy [lovingkindness], and to walk humbly with thy God?” (Micah 6:8).

- "Who among you will give ear to this? Who will hearken and hear for the time to come?” (Isaiah 42:23).

Churchill did not have a formal university education. Instead, he opted for a stint in the military. "It was not until this winter of 1896, when I had almost completed my 22nd year, that the desire for learning came upon me. I began to feel myself wanting in even the vaguest knowledge about many large spheres of thought."

Though he had little formal schooling, Churchill became well-educated and well-rounded by following each path his life took—through his primary school years, and then through military training and other experience. When he lacked knowledge in certain areas, he remedied these deficiencies by diligent self-study and observation of handpicked subjects, such as history, philosophy, economics, and religion.

Churchill's experiences, astuteness, and keen observations culminated in a fine and useful education. May we likewise be educated in Christ. I'm sure that all of us can be found wanting in the areas of His knowledge, wisdom, and understanding.

"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to his God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:6-9).

"To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive [understand or discern] the words of understanding; To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity; To give subtlety [prudence] to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion. A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain [acquire] unto wise counsel: To understand a proverb, and the interpretation [exegesis]; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings [riddles]. The fear [reverential awe] of the Lord is the principal beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction” (Prov. 1:2-7).
Pears from the Past by Don A. Sanford, historian

A sourcebook of our history

When General Conference met in Plainfield, N.J., 150 years ago (September of 1852), the Conference Business Committee reported: "We find ourselves embarrassed for the want of a clear knowledge of the powers, objects, and purposes of this organization. Our report must therefore be imperfect. We have, however, thought that we might safely present the following items for your consideration.

"We recommend that the General Conference appoint a committee, whose duty it shall be to collect all of the documents of the Conference, and submit them to the Seventh Day Baptist Publishing Society, to aid them in their important and interesting labors; and especially that through this channel we may secure through this channel we may secure for the want of a clear knowledge of this organization.

"Minutes of the Forty-fourth Session of the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference, meeting the Fifth-day before the second Sabbath in September, 1852, pp. 7-8.


These three volumes of 12 quarterly issues are among the most-used resources by later historians and genealogists.

In spite of its short life, these three volumes of 12 quarterly issues are among the most-used resources by later historians and genealogists.

The Publishing Society responded with the publication of the Seventh Day Baptist Memorial, "the design of which is to put in a permanent form such biographical, historical, and statistical matters suited to illustrate the rise, progress, and present condition of the Seventh Day Baptist Denomination."

The first issue of the Memorial was dated January 1853, and included the three areas of biography, history of churches and missions, and statistics which resembles in tabular form what is now included in the Seventh Day Baptist Yearbook.

This contained the listing of ministers and their locations, plus each church by Association, along with its pastor, clerk, mailing address, number of communicants, each of who are listed by church, along with a list of their members; a summary of SDB missions from earliest colonial days to the home missionaries of the 1850s; and the listing of ministers and some church statistics.

One year ago—November 2001

Features respond to the September 11 terrorist attacks: Cleo LaToche's nagging stomach ailment kept her away from her World Trade Center job that day; attorney David Massengill is left temporarily homeless as his home is one block east of the Trade Center.

Background shared about Floy Owen (Foothill SDB Church in Montrose, Calif.), the 2001 Robe of Achievement recipient.

Eowyn Driscoll introduces herself as the new Beacon editor.

The Cornerstone SDB Church in Pontotoc, Miss., is dedicated in June.

Paint Rock, Ala., church celebrates its 75th anniversary in August.

Five years ago—November 1997


Obituary lists accomplishments of former Executive Secretary Doris Fetherston.

Jan Bond, Shiloh, N.J., church, along with a list of communicants, plus each church by Association, along with its pastor, clerk, mailing address, number of communicants, each of who are listed by church.

The Cornerstone SDB Church in Pontotoc, Miss., is dedicated in June.

Paint Rock, Ala., church celebrates its 75th anniversary in August.

10 years ago—November 1992

Conference sermons presented by Pastor John Bevis and Jim Ayars.

Baptist women gather in Phoenix, Ariz., for the North American Baptist Women's Union.

"Pears" column looks at the history of the Newport, R.I., SDB Meeting House.

Memphis, Tenn., church enters new phase of public ministry.

Robe of Achievement recipient, Myrna Cox, profiled.

Allegheny Association sponsors county fair booth, Hope Church in Philadelphia, Pa., celebrates 10th anniversary.

25 years ago—November 1977

Frankie Davis—the 79-year-old conscientious secretary at the Battle Creek, Mich., SDB Church—is featured in the "Personality Profile."

Paster Melvin Stephan writes on the spiritual fruit of faithfulness.

"The Case for Quiet Saturdays"—a call for a national weekly day of rest, originated in a Christianity Today editorial by Harold Lindell—continues to build momentum. A panel discussion at Conference is led by Alton Wheeler, Herbert Saunders, Ted Horsley, and Duane Davis.

The SDB Memorial Board thanks Rev. Albert Rogers for his nine years of service to the Board.

New York City church acquires a former bank branch building to use as their worship facility.

50 years ago—November 1952

Middle Island, W.Va., and Los Angeles, Calif., churches highlighted in series called "Our Churches and What They Are Doing."

"You Must Be Born Again" is the closing sermon from Conference, by Rev. Alton Wheeler.

SDBs Joan Clement and Beth Severe study at the Bible Institute in Los Angeles to prepare for service in Nyasaland (now Malawi), Africa.

Pastor Earl Cruzan earns "award of merit" in Spiritual Mobilization's national sermon competition. The contest recognized the annual "Freedom Under God" observance of Independence Week.

...where are we headed?

Pray:

1. for God's hand of peace and protection
2. for our SDB World Federation
3. for true Sabbath convictions and practices
4. for the SDB Board of Christian Education
5. that more would consider overseas missions
6. for the work of our Memorial Board
7. with thanks for our American heritage
Christian Education

by Andrew J. Camenga

2002 Sabbath School Teacher of the Year

Larry Bird of the Washington, D.C., Seventh Day Baptist Church, is the recipient of the Crystal Apple Award as the 2002 Sabbath School Teacher of the Year.

Although Larry agreed to teach for only a few months, it soon became clear that he had "a thirst for the Lord and His Word."

Larry Bird accepts the Sabbath School Teacher of the Year award on behalf of his wife, Andrew Camenga made the presentation at Conference.

In nominating Larry, the church wrote, "The Washington SDB Church is biblically grounded for having such a one as Larry Bird. He may not be the famous Boston Celtic basketball player; nevertheless, he is famous and well-regarded in our midst."

Scripture Memory Honor Roll

You don't think your church can win the Mary G. Clare Scripture Memorization Award? You simply don't have enough people? Get your church on the Scripture Memory Honor Roll instead.

This church-level program recognizes SDB churches that successfully encourage a large portion of their worship attendees to complete the memorization program. When the number of people finishing the program is greater than 50 percent of the church's average worship attendance (as reported in the Yearbook), the church will be on the honor roll.

Each congregation on the Honor Roll will receive a framed certificate and will be listed in the Sabbath Recorder as a recipient of the award.

The Rez Connection

Following General Conference, Kirk and Vivian Looper joined me in visiting the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. There we met and worked with "Rez Connection" founder, Pastor Chet Marks and his wife, Barbara.

The Rez Connection refers to the reservation's connection with the resurrected Jesus Christ. While at Pine Ridge, we toured the sites where Pastor Chet and the Rez Connection take the Gospel to hundreds of young people each week via the mobile "sanctuary busses."

This ministry has many forms of outreach to the reservation, including the Mobile Ministry, Bible studies, and the New Life Fellowship Seventh Day Baptist Church.

For more information about this exciting ministry, check out the Rez Connection at their website: www.street.ns.ca/native.html

The Pine Ridge Reservation is in the southwest corner of South Dakota.

The Rez Connection reaches hundreds of Native Americans each week.

Pastor Chet Marks with his wife, Barbara, and their four children.

Teaching inside a 'sanctuary bus.'
Stand up for Jesus
by Eowyn Driscoll

As I write this, it's about one month following Conference, and I'm wondering what is going on in everyone's lives. My guess is that some people have living problems, and others' lives are going just dandy. But what are we doing about those things that we pledged to do after Conference?

At the Youth Banquet, Justin Hibbard asked us to "stand up for Jesus," and all of us found that easy to do. Why? Because we believe in the same thing. No one was going to go, "Ew, you believe in God? You're a loser!" But at home, there's often a risk in standing for the Lord.

The question is, "Why don't we take that risk?" Why are we not willing to say, "Yes, I believe that Christ is my Lord and Savior" when we are not around our Christian fellows? Why are we cowardly?

It is not a question of faith; it is a question of pride. As people, we are willing to subject ourselves to the slander which will inevitably follow if we say or do something in the name of God?

1 Corinthians 1:23 says, "We preach Christ crucified: to the Jews a stumbling block, to the Greeks foolishness." Our world is full of "Greeks," and we're afraid to appear foolish in the eyes of our friends.

What if I told you that foolishness is in the eye of the beholder? Truly, it is. What appears foolish—like saying a prayer or thanking God for something, or simply not submitting to peer pressure because that's not what God would have us do—looks silly to the "Greeks" in our lives. But not to our friends at Conference.

I can almost hear you saying, "But my Conference friends don't live anywhere near me, so I don't get any Christian fellowship."

I can tell you this: Because of God, the SDB Youth Fellowship is always there with you, mentally beside you even when you aren't physically with them. God brings the SDBYF together at retreats and Conference to learn about Him and to praise His name, so that even when we are apart, we will know that we do not stand alone.

Like Justin, I will ask you to stand up for Jesus. Stand up for your faith and for your God, who is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John 14:6).

Do not be afraid. God will always be with you. And there will always be people who understand that, even when they are on the other side of a continent. 

Are we willing to subject ourselves to the slander which will inevitably follow if we say or do something in the name of God?

I feel fortunate to have grown up in a state where I can "taste" the delectable delights of four very different seasons. (Admittedly, my appetite for freezing weather and snow decreases as my age increases.)

When I was young, my least favorite season was summer. That may seem strange, since summer meant no school and countless evenings playing outside until dusk. But it was the 1950s, and our family lacked the things that made summer months in Wisconsin—especially July and August—bearable.

We "air-conditioned" our house and car by opening windows, which often meant that we simply gave all of that hot, humid air a new place to visit.

My siblings and I slept upstairs during the winter, but summer always meant a move downstairs. (My brother had the front porch cot all to himself, while my sister and I shared the bed on the back porch.)

I feel warm all over—and strangely content—each time I see freshly picked fields, and piles of pumpkins and squash standing guard at barn doors. Every fall, God blesses us with a bountiful harvest so that we can face the barrenness of the upcoming winter with confidence and thankfulness.

Several weeks ago, I called my son in St. Petersburg, Fla. As we talked, I informed him that autumn was never my favorite season.

In spite of mud and snow, spring and winter have their good points. But, as a youngster, I always enjoyed autumn the most. And I still do.

Who but God would think of creating majestic trees topped with green leaves that fall to earth in vivid swirls of red and yellow and gold? Who but God would fill orchards with both tart and sweet apples and then complement their crispiness with even crispier air?

I pray that God will grant all of us the privilege of enjoying His changing seasons for years to come.
Our theme this year is, "I am in Christ." We usually prefer to think about "Christ in me." So what do I mean by being in Christ? How does that differ from Christ being in me?

We (at least I) prefer to be passive Christians. We emphasize that Jesus died for our sins, and that our salvation is God's free gift. We pray for those who are sick or struggling; we ask God to heal them, lighten their load, and solve their problems.

The Sabbath School teacher-help that I use suggested that, for one month, we don't ask God to do anything; our prayers should be only to praise Him for what He has done. This made me think of my own prayers.

Jesus said, "Ask and you will receive, seek and you will find, knock and it will be opened to you" (Matt. 7:7-8). We are very good at the first part of that verse, but we stop there. That characterizes the "Christ in me" thinking. Christ is in me, therefore I will ask him to solve all of the problems that I and others encounter.

So how are we to be in Christ? Jesus said, "Do the works I do because I am in the Father and the Father is in me." So if we are to be in Christ, as He is in the Father, we must first start with Christ as our example. Instead of trying to find time for God in our lives, we must center our lives in God.

When we work, are we working "in Christ" or for ourselves? (Ephesians 6:5-9). Would anyone at your workplace suspect that you are a Christian? We must be in Christ at work.

In your family life, does your family think of you as a Christian? (Ephesians 5:22-6:4). When you are out with "the boys" (or girls), or on vacation, are your actions and words pleasing to God?

What do you think about? Psalm 19:14 says, "May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my redeemer." We often say this verse as a closing. Do we really mean it?

Asking is easy. We just tell God what He needs to do (of course, if it is in His will). Seeking and knocking is work; it calls for us to do something—out to earn our salvation, but to be His servants.

So, for the next month, when you have a concern for an individual, ask God to show you how you can be His servant to that person.

“The things I want to know are in books; my best friend is the man who'll get me a book I ain't read.” - Abraham Lincoln (From Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years by Carl Sandburg.)

Whenever "Abe" had a chance—in the field, at work, or in the house—he explained to others what he got from books. Plus he wrote poetry and letters for others. What he learned in school didn't satisfy him.

The style of the Bible and Aesop's Fables, and the hearts and minds behind those books, were always in his thoughts. 'The stories and sayings of people, plus the wisdom and mercy of God, continually ran through his head. His eyes "caught the learning" that radiated from the written page. Books comforted Abe, and helped him to understand the rights and wrongs of man's relationship to God.

Most of us are a mix of Lincoln, the self-educated man. Knowing that SDBs, in general, are a well-educated group is both a source of pride and disappointment.

When I was younger, I thought that all Seventh Day Baptists were school teachers like my parents, either college level or high school. But we've gradually allowed our SDB-related colleges and universities to slip away.

Thanks to the efforts of Historian Don Sanford and others, we have a great deal of SDB history to read and appreciate. Don's excellent scholarship—along with the Helping Hand, Nurture Series, and the Sabbath Recorder—gives us a large supply of historical data to read, enjoy, absorb, and use in our lives. This information is offered to us right in our own churches and homes.

Carl Sandburg once said of Lincoln, "Days came when he sank deep in the stream of human life and felt himself kin of all that swam in it, whether the waters were crystal clear or mud."

This also happens to us. Through sermons, Bible Study groups, and our own initiative, let's all read and rise out of the mud that life throws at us almost daily.

Read the Bible and eat sparingly...
Finding Joy

September women's retreat at Camp Joy

Finding Joy is a little different from the TV show Judging Amy. For one thing, there was no courtroom drama at Camp Joy in Berea, Va., where 25 women gathered over the weekend of September 29-30. Instead, we had picnic tables, bunt beds, and stars in the night sky. Seventh Day Baptist women from Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia leaned on red-checked tablecloths and compiled a list of "joy boosters" by sharing personal experiences which had challenged their joy.

Throughout the weekend, these "retreaters" cried, prayed, laughed, and sang together, rediscovering the many "joy boosters" that God provides daily. (The blend of female voices singing in the Berea church sanctuary conjured up images of angel choirs.)

During the last of the retreat's six sessions, Rosalie Camacho, of Columbus, Ohio, using the Women of Faith Bible Series by Zondervan, gave the campers a booster bag. Each bag contained 10 items: chewing gum to remind them that God sticks with them, an adhesive bandage with a heart sticker on it, a rubber band to represent God's binding strength, a napkin to remind them that He cleans up their messes, etc.

On Sabbath day, Dusty Davis of Salem, Va., preached her first sermon. She verbally led the ladies through three dance moves which she learned from the book, Turn My Trust His heart, and "Those who believe in tomorrow can live better today.

Women from each church took turns in the camp kitchen, concocting a variety of scrumptious fare. Food ranged from festive tacos and homemade vegetable soup, to cinnamon French toast and egg goldenrod. Yum-yum! (And, of course, chocolate is necessary if one wants to "move themselves." One of the "Pennsylvania girls," still singing the catch-phrase the next morning, celebrated the whole retreat experience by climbing aboard a wheeled, antique mop bucket and threatening to ride it like a sled down the ramp in the girls' dorm. Area women who would like to create their own booster bags are invited to call Pat Slackford at (904) 745-4481, or Janet Thorngate at (904) 792-1757 for details.

Great and joyful thanks go to Diana Housel and Dusty Davis of Salem for planning the retreats. The Columbus ladies volunteered to plan the next one, scheduled for April 25-27, 2003.

Look, listen, and learn, cont. from page 13

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct (make smooth or straight) thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes; fear the Lord, and depart from evil" (Prov. 3:5-7).

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105).

"...If ye continue (abide) in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32).

"Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom" (Psalm 51:6).
Penfold - Martin.—Adam Michael Penfold and Marie Nicole Martin were united in marriage on May 27, 2002, at the Salem, WV, Seventh Day Baptist Church, with Rev. Dale D. Thorngate officiating.

Sias - Goodson.—Walter Joshua Sias and Jessica Paige Goodson were united in marriage on May 31, 2002, at the Salem, WV, Seventh Day Baptist Church, with Dr. Paul D. Davis presiding.

Modesit - Barnes.—Chad Modesit and Laura Lee Barnes were united in marriage on July 20, 2002, at SDB Camp Joy in Berrius, WV, Rev. Dale D. Thorngate presiding.

Davis - Butler.—Brian Davis and Wendy Butler were united in marriage on August 24, 2002, at the Shilo, NJ, Seventh Day Baptist Church, with Pastor Don Chroninger officiating.

Petehl - Will.—John James Petehl and Tabatha Marie Will were united in marriage on August 31, 2002 in Buxton, NC, with Rev. Dale D. Thorngate officiating.

Dodge Center, MN
Dale E. Rood, pastor
Joining after baptism
Lindsey Cowden
Danny Knudson

Hebron, PA
T. Lee Bennet, interim pastor
Joining after testimony
Allen D. Hauber

Raritan Valley, NJ
Jeanne York, pastor
Joining after testimony
Cleopatra LaTouche

Salem, WV
Dale D. Thorngate, pastor
Joining after testimony
Archie D. Edzell
Frances K. Edzell
Roy E. Key
Sonia S. Key
Joining by letter
John James Petehl

Niemann & Niemann.—
Laurence and Kathryn Niemann, who were a few weeks away from marking their 67th wedding anniversary, remained companions in death as well as life. Laurence died on August 18, 2002, at the age of 87, while his beloved Kathryn, 85, passed away five days later, on August 23.

Laurence was born on February 4, 1915, on a farm west of Cummings, Kan., the son of William Christian and Lena (Nolting) Niemann. He was brought up in a Christian home and accepted Christ as his Savior at an early age.

Laurence, who was 9 when his father died, attended Lane School for six years and then the Lutheran Parochial School for two years. He also attended Nortonville, Kan., High School.

He and Kathryn married on September 10, 1935, at the Seventh Day Baptist parsonage in Nortonville. They farmed west of Cummings until purchasing a farm southwest of Nortonville in 1957.

With the help of his wife, he ran a foster boarding home at their farm from 1960 to 1967. He was a patient and gentle man, and over the years was a loving substitute father to 17 children, ranging from eight days to 16 years of age.

Beside farming, Laurence had his own machinery repair business. After retiring and moving to Nortonville in 1979, he ran a shop where he repaired small engines. He also plowed gardens in the fall to keep active, and made many small-scale replicas, including one of the Nortonville business district and the Santa Fe Railroad Station.

Laurence served on the Lane School Board for a number of years, and faithfully cared for his wheel-chair-bound wife since 1989.

Kathryn Louise Kenyon was born on December 8, 1916 near Nortonville, the second daughter of Orla H. and Essie (Van Horn) Kenyon. She was baptized and joined the Nortonville SDB Church in October of 1926. In 1934 she graduated from Nortonville High School.

She was an active lifetime church member, singing in the choir for more than 25 years. She served as president of the church’s Ladies Missionary Society several times and also served as its treasurer. In her younger years, she taught Sabbath School.

Kathryn took great interest in the past, serving as church historian for over 30 years. She wrote a book about the church’s history, which was published in 1986.

Kathryn made wedding, birthday, and anniversary cakes, and worked for several people by making and dressing dolls.

Survivors of the couple include one son, Danny L. Niemann, of Pueblo, Colo.; Kathryn’s sister, Reba Niemann; and by a foster daughter, Rita Joan Berry Niemann.

They were preceded in death by their father, Leonard Niemann, born March 3, 1912, and mother, Essie (Van Horn) Kenyon.

Their children are: one daughter, Patsy Christina Niemann; one son, Danny L. Niemann; two grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Obituaries

Hemphill.—Marjorie L. Hemphill, 86, of Geneseo, Pa., died on August 31, 2002, in the Charles Cole Memorial Hospital, Cookersport, Pa.

She was born on October 15, 1915, in Allegany Township, Pa., the daughter of Erville and Anna (Reynolds) Green. She graduated from the Lewisville Vocational School in Ulysses, Pa., in 1935.

On November 28, 1940, she married S. Burton Hemphill in Cookersport. He preceded her on November 15, 1995. The couple owned and operated a dairy farm in Geneseo for many years.

Marjorie was a faithful member of the First SDB Church of Hebron for 39 years, transferring her 21-year-membership from the Hebron Center SDB Church after its closing.

Survivors include one son, Danny L. Niemann, of Pueblo, Colo.; Kathryn’s sister, Reba Wheeler; three grandchildren, three great-grandsons, three great-great-granddaughters, and six nieces and nephews.

They were preceded in death by an infant daughter, Beverly Anita Niemann, and by a foster daughter, Rita Joan Berry Niemann.

Funeral services for Laurence and Kathryn were held on August 22 and August 23, respectively. Both services were held at the Nortonville SDB Church, with Rev. Stephan F. Saunders and Dr. Kenneth Smith officiating. Internment was in the Nortonville Cemetery.

Dear SR correspondent:
Thank you for keeping us informed of your church family news. If you need more of the two-part information forms please let us know. You may also e-mail your updates to us at sdbmedia@lwvs.com.

If you mail in obituaries cut or copied from the newspaper, please make sure that the death and service dates are listed, along with the location of the burial. Thank you.
Boy, am I sore.

My back is sore. My shoulder is sore.

Even my lips are sore—and I'm out of breath.

We're hosting the North Central Association this weekend, so I've been practicing the sousaphone to play in the Milton church's brass choir.

You've probably seen one of these monsters. It's the big brass instrument that wraps around the player like a jungle python, and has a huge, foghorn-like bell that's big enough to display a school's insignia in its marching band.

Fortunately, the one I play is made of fiberglass. Unfortunately, it isn't really mine. Paul Green, our "conductor," has to borrow the horn from the Milton middle school just prior to our performance. This means that I have little time to regain my "playing lips" and breathing capacity that I had in the old days. (Oh no; now I'm sounding like Leanne's "Reflections" page.)

This is only the third time in the last two years that I've picked up the old band instrument. Over a quarter century ago I would wiggle into the beast several times a week all through my high school years. (Funny how I don't have as much wiggle room these days...)

Now, the young whipper-snappers in Milton smirk at me as I write down all the fingerings for the notes. "Hey," I tell them. "Some things escape one's memory after 25—or more—years!" What do they know? Some of them are barely past halfway toward their first 25 years of life.

With this third round of recent performing, the fingerings are coming a bit more quickly and I'm getting a feel for the music in a shorter time.

Perhaps it was the good training. I was "trained up" as a youth in the art of sousaphone playing. I had "departed" from it for more than half my life, but have happily returned to this segment of my musical roots.

Let's keep training our children in God's Word and will and way. May they not depart.

But if they do flee for a time, pray that the foundational lessons and principles pull them back, and they once again enjoy being in harmony with the Lord and His people.

Seventh Day Baptist Week of Prayer
January 5-11, 2003

This prayer booklet will be sent to each Conference. It is written by Pastor Al B. Paypa, president of the SDB Philippine Convention.

World Federation Sabbath January 11, 2003

We ask that each church take a special offering for the SDB World Federation.
“Class, how do you spell relief?”

Please give generously to the SDB United Relief Fund through your local church on Thanksgiving Sabbath, or mail your gift directly to:

SDB United Relief Fund
P.O. Box 1678
Janesville, WI 53547-1678

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Please remember the United Relief Fund on November 30

Are you wondering what to do next summer? Are you wanting to serve God?

In the Summer Christian Service Corps you can serve God and get acquainted with some of our fantastic youth. See what it’s like to commit yourself to a challenging experience.

For applications, contact:
Linda Camenga, 209 First Ave.
Daytona Beach, FL 32114
Phone: (386) 255-4743
scsc@sdbwboard.org

Application Deadlines:
Team members—Jan. 15
Churches—Feb. 1

Check the Women’s Society Web site for more info:
www.sdbwboard.org